

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761119715589>

89-503

Government
Publications

38

atalogue no. 89-503-XPE



Women in Canada

Sixth edition

A gender-based
statistical report

2010-2011



Statistics Canada and
Status of Women Canada

Statistique Canada et
Condition féminine Canada

Canada

How to obtain more information

For information about this product or the wide range of services and data available from Statistics Canada, visit our website at www.statcan.ca or contact us by e-mail at infostats@statcan.ca or by telephone from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday:

Statistics Canada National Contact Centre

Toll-free telephone (Canada and the United States):

Inquiries line	1-800-263-1136
National telecommunications device for the hearing impaired	1-800-363-7629
Fax line	1-877-287-4369

Local or international calls:

Inquiries line	1-613-951-8116
Fax line	1-613-951-0581

Depository services program

Inquiries line	1-800-635-7943
Fax line	1-800-565-7757

Accessing and ordering information

This product, Catalogue no. 89-503-X, is also available as a standard printed publication.

The following additional shipping charges apply for delivery outside Canada:

	Single issue
United States	CAN\$6.00
Other countries	CAN\$10.00

Since this publication has a restricted print run, the number of print copies are limited to 2 per client.

The printed version of this publication can be ordered by:

- Telephone (Canada and United States) 1-800-267-6677
- Fax (Canada and United States) 1-877-287-4369
- E-mail infostats@statcan.ca
- Mail
Statistics Canada
Finance
R.H. Coats Bldg., 6th Floor
150 Tunney's Pasture Driveway
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6

When notifying us of a change in your address, please provide both old and new addresses.

Standards of service to the public

Statistics Canada is committed to serving its clients in a prompt, reliable and courteous manner. To this end, the Agency has developed standards of service which its employees observe in serving its clients. To obtain a copy of these service standards, please contact Statistics Canada toll free at 1-800-263-1136. The service standards are also published on www.statcan.ca under "About us" > "Providing services to Canadians."

Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report

Sixth edition

Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

© Minister of Industry, 2012

All rights reserved. The content of this electronic publication may be reproduced, in whole or in part, and by any means, without further permission from Statistics Canada, subject to the following conditions: that it be done solely for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary, and/or for non-commercial purposes; and that Statistics Canada be fully acknowledged as follows: Source (or "Adapted from", if appropriate): Statistics Canada, year of publication, name of product, catalogue number, volume and issue numbers, reference period and page(s). Otherwise, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form, by any means—electronic, mechanical or photocopy—or for any purposes without prior written permission of Licensing Services, Client Services Division, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0T6.

March 2012

Catalogue no. 89-503-X

ISBN 978-1-100-20001-9

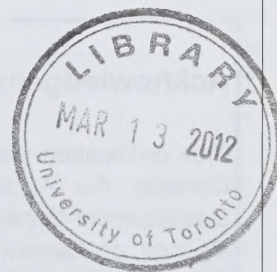
Frequency: Occasional

Ottawa

Cette publication est également disponible en français.

Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long-standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued cooperation and goodwill.



User information

Symbols

The following standard symbols are used in Statistics Canada publications:

- . not available for any reference period
- .. not available for a specific reference period
- ... not applicable
- 0 true zero or a value rounded to zero
- 0^s value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
- P preliminary
- r revised
- x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
- E use with caution
- F too unreliable to be published

Acknowledgements

This publication was made possible thanks to the collaboration and financial support of Status of Women Canada, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, Justice Canada, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Health Canada, Canadian Heritage, Public Health Agency of Canada, Public Works and Government Services Canada, Public Safety Canada, Western Economic Diversification Canada, Canadian Human Rights Commission, Department of National Defence, National Council of Welfare, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

This edition of *Women in Canada* was prepared by the Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division of Statistics Canada. The Statistics Canada team would like to acknowledge Status of Women for their role coordinating the review process with all partners.

Table of contents

Introduction	9
Chapter 1 Female Population	11
A slim female majority.....	11
Age distribution	13
Female population across Canada	15
Aboriginal identity	17
Immigrant status	18
Females belonging to visible minority groups.....	19
Residential mobility	21
Languages spoken	22
Religious affiliation and religiosity.....	24
Chapter 2 Families, Living Arrangements and Unpaid Work	27
Most women live as part of couples	27
Women in common-law unions increasing	29
Women in same-sex couples a growing minority	31
Couples with children declining over time	32
Share of female lone-parent families remains stable in recent years	34
Fewer children and older mothers	35
Fewer marriages	37
Stable number of divorces	38
Intact families most common	39
Many older women live alone	39
Living arrangements vary by ethnocultural group	40
Unpaid work inside and outside the home.....	42
Women spend more time on care of children in the household than men	42
Women do more domestic work than men	43
Division of housework evolving between the sexes	45
Women spent more time caring for seniors.....	46
Slightly more women volunteered than men	47

Chapter 3 Women and Health	49
Well-being and measures of health	49
Self-rating mental health and stress	51
Perception of stress level	52
Fitness measures	53
Satisfaction with life	55
Chronic health conditions	56
Prevalence of arthritis	56
Cancer	59
High blood pressure	60
Heart disease	60
Diabetes	63
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	63
Mood and anxiety disorders	63
Effects of chronic conditions	64
HIV and AIDS	66
Risk factors and health-related behaviours	66
Household food security and insecurity	74
Contraception and sexual behaviours	75
Teenage pregnancy	77
Changes made to improve health	78
Accessing and using health care services	79
Update on mammography use	82
Women and health occupations	82
Life expectancy	84
Causes of death	85
The health of women born abroad	87
Chapter 4 Women and Education	89
Evolution of schooling from 1990 to 2009	90
Provincial variations in level of educational attainment	91
Elementary and secondary school	93
Girls aged 5 and 9: Readiness to learn and elementary school results	95
High school graduation and dropping out	96
Paid work during high school	98
Trade schools and registered apprenticeship training programs	99
College studies	101
University studies	103
Women and university programs	104
Studying part time at university	105
Employment earnings of women and men by level of schooling	106
Female university graduates and marriage	108
Women in the field of education	109
Participation in job-related studies or training programs	110

Chapter 5 Paid Work	111
Women in the labour market	111
Employment by province	112
Education level linked to employment rate	113
Young women saw steep employment losses during recent downturn	114
More employed mothers	115
Mothers in two-parent families more likely to be employed than lone-parent mothers	117
Women are more likely to work part time than men	119
Increasing numbers of women are self-employed	121
Young women and men are more likely to have temporary employment	123
Multiple job-holding increases for women	124
Unionization rates higher for women than men	125
Despite progress, women still concentrated in traditional female occupations	127
Even in an economic slowdown, unemployment rate lower for women than men	129
Reasons for unemployment vary	132
Immigrants and the labour market	133
The Aboriginal population and the labour market	135
Employment Insurance eligibility up for women and men in 2009	136
Chapter 6 Economic Well-being	139
The many determinants of economic well-being	139
Income	140
Sources of income	145
Composition of income by family type	146
Earnings	147
Low income	154
Women with low income	154
Low income and family status	155
Children living in low income	156
Financial security	157
Assets by family type	157
Debts	158
Net worth	158
Retirement savings	159
Contributions to pension plans	159
Contributions to registered retirement savings plans	162
Home ownership and shelter affordability	163
The gender pay gap revisited	166
Factors contributing to the decline in the gender wage gap	167
Chapter 7 Women and the Criminal Justice System	169
Female Victims of Violent Crime	169
Self-reported criminal victimization	169
Police-reported violent crime	170
Child and youth victims of police-reported violent crime, 2008	173
Self-reported spousal violence	173
Help seeking behaviour	177
Use of transition homes	178
Female victims of homicide	180
Female offenders in Canada	183
Trends in female perpetrated crime	186
Female offenders in the courts	190
Trends in adult and youth criminal courts	193
Female offenders under correctional supervision	195
Trends in female admissions to custody	197
Characteristics of women in custody	197
Representation of Aboriginal women under correctional supervision	200
Women in justice-related occupations	203

Chapter 8 First Nations, Métis and Inuit women	205
Aboriginal population definition.....	205
A growing population	206
'Ethnic mobility' and the growth of the Métis population.....	208
Indian status	208
Bill C-31 and Bill C-3.....	210
Distribution of Aboriginal women across the country	211
Living in census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations.....	211
Living in rural areas	213
Living on reserve	214
Living in Inuit Nunangat.....	215
A relatively young population.....	215
Senior Aboriginal women.....	216
Life expectancy.....	217
Aboriginal women and their families.....	219
Lone parents.....	220
Fertility rates	220
Teen parents.....	220
Recent research findings about Aboriginal girls and teens	221
Crowded housing.....	222
Half of Nunavut homes overcrowded	223
Housing adequacy.....	223
Aboriginal languages	224
Older women more likely to speak an Aboriginal language	225
Higher proportions speak Aboriginal languages on reserve and in the North.....	226
Factors in Aboriginal language retention.....	226
Paid work	226
Sales and service most common occupation	228
High unemployment rates.....	230
Sharper decrease in employment for Aboriginal people during labour market downturn	231
Unemployment rates decrease with higher levels of education	231
Inuit harvesting activities.....	232
Income	233
Income gap	233
Sources of income	234
Below the low income cut-off (LICO).....	234
Incomplete high school	235
Youth aged 15- to 19-year-olds not in school: Comparing internationally.....	237
Aboriginal women less likely to have a university degree	237
More Aboriginal women achieving postsecondary qualifications	238
Residential school attendance.....	239
Spousal violence.....	240
Missing and murdered Aboriginal women	242
Health.....	243
Métis women—Excerpt from 'Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2006: An overview of the Health of the Métis population'	244
Living with chronic conditions	244
Inuit women—Excerpt from: 'Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2006: Inuit Health and Social Conditions'.....	245
Arthritis or rheumatism the most common chronic condition among Aboriginal women.....	246
Contact with health care professionals.....	247
Definitions	249

Chapter 9 Immigrant Women	251
One in five women are born outside Canada	251
The majority come under the family or economic categories	252
Principle applicants in the Economic Class	253
Immigrant women come from many countries	255
Many recent immigrant women belong to visible minorities	256
The majority settle in large population centres	257
Almost one-half of Toronto's female population are immigrants	259
Recent arrivals are younger, but the overall immigrant population is older	260
More immigrant women are married.....	261
The majority live with family members.....	262
High naturalization rate	264
Linguistic diversity.....	265
Use of official languages increases with time lived in Canada.....	266
Higher educational attainment	266
School attendance higher for recent immigrant women	267
Similar major fields of study as Canadian-born women	268
Immigrant women in the labour force	269
Employment rate increased from 2001 to 2006 but still lower than for Canadian-born women.....	270
Higher employment rate among older immigrant workers.....	271
Most are wage earners; a higher proportion work part time	272
In traditional female jobs.....	272
Challenges in labour market integration	273
Labour market experience since 2006	274
Employment income is the major income source	275
Sources of government transfers vary by age group	275
Incidence of low-income	277
Employment earnings increased over time for immigrants of all admission categories.....	278
Share of total income from government transfers declined over time	278
Principal applicants who arrived after 2002 had higher median earnings than earlier cohorts.....	278
Filed taxation on employment earnings soon after arrival.....	279
Definitions	280
Chapter 10 Visible Minority Women	283
The visible minority population is growing	283
Changing immigration patterns.....	284
A diverse population	285
One in three visible minority women are born in Canada.....	286
Generational status reflects immigration history.....	287
Visible minority immigrant women come from many countries	289
Most live in large population centres	289
A relatively young population.....	292
Family status varies by visible minority group	293
Most could converse in an official language.....	295
A well-educated population	296
Percentage of university degree holders varies by visible minority group	298
Over three-quarters of young visible minority women attend school	303
The majority of visible minority women are employed.....	304
Employment rates differ by visible minority groups	305
Higher unemployment rate	306
Part-time work.....	307
Over one-half employed in traditional female occupations.....	308
Lower employment income.....	311
Higher incidence of low income	312
Earnings gap disappears among the second and third generation or more	313
Perceived experience of discrimination	314
Definitions	316

Chapter 11 Senior Women	319
Population aging continues	319
Increasing life expectancy	322
Diversity of senior women	323
Many senior women live in a family context	325
Many recent senior immigrant women live with relatives	327
Extent of social network decreases with age for senior women	328
Nearly one senior woman in three had done volunteer work	331
The proportion of senior women holding a paid job doubled in the past decade	333
Increased average income and more diverse income sources	336
Government transfers have declined	337
Low income for senior women continues to decline	339
The majority of senior women describe their health in positive terms	340
Chronic health conditions	342
High blood pressure is senior women's most common chronic health condition	343
Tobacco use and diet differed	343
Senior women are more likely to be physically inactive than their male counterparts	344
Pain and injuries more common for women	345
More senior women than men receive informal assistance with everyday activities because of a chronic health condition	346
Living in collective households or institutions	348
Senior women living longer	349
Heart disease and cancer cause most deaths for senior women	350
Chapter 12 Women with Activity Limitations	355
Measuring the population with activity limitations	355
Women are more likely than men to have an activity limitation	355
The population with activity limitations is substantially older	356
Pain is the most common cause of poor functional health among women with activity limitations	357
Women perceive that their activity limitations stem largely from disease or illness	359
Half of women with activity limitations have arthritis and/or back problems	360
Over one-quarter of women with a chronic physical health problem also have a psychological condition	361
One-quarter of women with activity limitations live alone	361
Women with activity limitations have less postsecondary education	362
Over half of women with activity limitations say activities at home are restricted by their condition	363
Half of women with activity limitations need help with everyday tasks	364
Women of prime working age participate less in the workforce if they have activity limitations	365
Accommodations in the workplace	367
Women with activity limitations report 25% lower personal income than other women	369
Household income gap even wider	372
No income gap when main source of income is the same	373
The majority of women with activity limitations report non-employment income as their main source of income	374
Women with activity limitations score below normal on well-being measures	376
Women with activity limitations visit the doctor more and exercise less	377

Introduction

Welcome to the sixth edition of *Women in Canada* – representing the 25th anniversary of this publication. The first edition of *Women in Canada* was published in 1985, the same year as the United Nations Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi. The report from the Conference noted that a 'lack of reliable data prevents the assessment of relative improvements in women's status in the various sectors', and urged '[f]urther investment in evolving adequate gender-specific data'.¹ *Women in Canada*'s scope and purpose outlined in 1985 responded to that call, and continues today: 'It is intended to aid the continuing discussion and evaluation of the changing roles and social characteristics of Canadian women as well as contribute to the development of policies concerning the status of women in Canada.'²

Understanding the role of women in Canadian society and how it has changed over time is dependent on having information that can begin to shed light on the diverse circumstances and experiences of women. *Women in Canada* provides an unparalleled compilation of data related to women's family status, education, employment, economic well-being, unpaid work, health, and more. Published by Statistics Canada, this edition of *Women in Canada* provides users with a valuable source of gender-disaggregated data that help explore issues and trends related to gender equality.

Women in Canada allows readers to better understand the experience of women compared to that of men. Recognizing that women are not a homogenous group and that experiences differ not only across gender but also within gender groups, *Women in Canada* includes chapters on immigrant women, women in a visible minority, Aboriginal women, senior women, and women with participation and activity limitations.

Status of Women Canada and collaborating federal organization's financial support of the publication *Women in Canada* helps fulfill the Government of Canada's commitment to encourage Gender-Based Analysis (GBA). Gender-Based Analysis is the process of examining a policy, program or initiative for its impacts on a variety of different groups of women and men. It provides a snapshot in time, capturing the realities of diverse women and men affected by a particular issue. Implementing GBA depends on the capacity of all users, including policy and decision-makers to have a variety of data and information sources. *Women in Canada* provides some of this information, and can be complemented with other sources of information and analysis. While *Women in Canada* presents a comprehensive statistical portrait of Canadian women, gaps in information and analysis may still exist. Readers of *Women in Canada* looking for further information should contact Status of Women Canada or Statistics Canada directly. Specific questions related to the data or analysis contained in this report should be directed to Statistics Canada by calling 1 800 263-1136 or by consulting the Statistics Canada website at <http://www.statcan.gc.ca>.

¹ United Nations (1986) *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace*, New York: United Nations. Retrieved on September 1, 2010.

² Statistics Canada (1985) *Women in Canada: a Statistical Report*, Ottawa: Statistics Canada, p iii.

Chapter 1

Female Population

by Covadonga Robles Urquijo and Anne Milan

This chapter of *Women in Canada* introduces the socio-demographic and ethno-cultural characteristics of women and girls, many of which will be explored in greater detail in other chapters of this publication. Understanding the current trends related to an aging, and an increasingly diverse, female population can help inform policy and planning. Topics examined in this chapter include the distribution of the female population by age group, across the provinces and territories, and the share with an Aboriginal identity. In addition, aspects of diversity within the female population, including immigrant status and visible minority status, will be presented as well as residential mobility, language-related characteristics and religious affiliation and religiosity. Where appropriate, trends over time will be analyzed and comparisons will be drawn with the male population in order to highlight existing similarities and differences.

A slim female majority

Women and girls comprise just over half of Canada's population. In 2010, 17.2 million females accounted for 50.4% of the total population, continuing a slim female majority that has held for over three decades (Table 1.1). In the data recorded from 1921 to 1971, the percentage of males was slightly higher than that of females. In 1921, 48.5% of the population was female, rising to 49.8% in 1971. Over the past century, gains in life expectancy have benefited women more than men. Lower mortality rates for females throughout most of the life course contributed to a slightly higher share of females than males in the population. According to the medium-growth scenario of the most recent population projections, the female majority would continue for the next 50 years.³

3. Statistics Canada, 2010. *Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories: 2009 to 2036*. Catalogue no. 91-520-X.

Table 1.1
Total population, Canada, 1921 to 2061

Year	Females	as a % of the total population	Males	Total
	thousands		thousands	
1921	4,258.3	48.5	4,529.6	8,787.9
1931	5,002.2	48.2	5,374.5	10,376.8
1941	5,606.1	48.7	5,900.5	11,506.7
1951	6,920.6	49.4	7,088.9	14,009.4
1956	7,928.9	49.3	8,151.9	16,080.8
1961	9,019.4	49.5	9,218.9	18,238.2
1966	9,960.5	49.8	10,054.3	20,014.9
1971 ¹	10,935.6	49.8	11,026.5	21,962.0
1976 ¹	11,726.5	50.0	11,723.4	23,449.8
1981 ¹	12,468.7	50.2	12,351.2	24,819.9
1986 ¹	13,148.9	50.4	12,951.4	26,100.3
1991 ¹	14,133.0	50.4	13,904.4	28,037.4
1996 ¹	14,959.9	50.5	14,650.3	29,610.2
2001 ¹	15,653.4	50.5	15,365.6	31,019.0
2006 ¹	16,428.2	50.4	16,147.9	32,576.1
2010 ¹	17,191.5	50.4	16,917.3	34,108.8
Projections²				
2011	17,403.0	50.4	17,129.2	34,532.2
2016	18,387.8	50.4	18,106.1	36,493.8
2021	19,356.4	50.4	19,049.1	38,405.5
2026	20,316.3	50.4	19,971.4	40,287.7
2031	21,244.5	50.5	20,849.4	42,093.9
2036	22,136.4	50.5	21,685.3	43,821.7
2041	23,009.2	50.5	22,509.6	45,518.8
2046	23,877.2	50.6	23,346.7	47,224.0
2051	24,748.5	50.6	24,206.7	48,955.2
2056	25,637.4	50.5	25,101.5	50,738.9
2061	26,570.5	50.5	26,050.3	52,620.8

1. Estimates adjusted for net census undercoverage.

2. Projections are based on medium-growth scenario.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1921 to 1966; and Demography Division, 1971 to 2006; and *Annual Demographic Estimates: Canada, Provinces and Territories*. Cat. No 91-215-X, 2010; and *Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories: 2009 to 2036*. Catalogue no. 91-520-X, 2011 to 2061.

Looking abroad, some countries had a female share even greater than Canada's. In Russia, Japan and France, among others, the female share of the population exceeded 51%; in countries such as Sweden and the United Kingdom, the share was closer to that of Canada. Women have a higher life expectancy than men and a higher percentage of females are observed in countries with the greatest sex differentials in life expectancy. In other countries, such as China (48.5%) and India (48.1%), less than half of the total population was female.⁴

While the overall share of females in the population has been fairly stable, the female population, similar to the male population, has grown in absolute numbers over the past century. And it is expected to continue to grow. According to the medium-growth scenario of the most recent population projections, by 2031, Canada may have 21.2 million women and girls; by 2061, 26.6 million.⁵ This is up substantially from early in the last century: in 1921, there were 4.3 million females.

Age distribution

The female population in Canada, like the population in general, is aging. This is owing to a combination of factors including low fertility, increasing life expectancy, and the movement of the large baby boom cohort through the age structure. This large cohort, born between 1946 and 1965, was 45 to 64 years old in 2010: they made up about 28% of the overall female population in that year (Table 1.2). In fact, more women belonged to the 45-to-54 age group, 16%, than to any other 10-year age group.

Table 1.2
Population, by age group, Canada, 2010

Age group	Females			Males	
	thousands	%	as a % of the age group	thousands	%
Under 5	914.7	5.3	48.7	963.4	5.7
5 to 14	1,818.1	10.6	48.6	1,920.4	11.4
15 to 24	2,236.9	13.0	48.7	2,354.8	13.9
25 to 34	2,333.1	13.6	49.7	2,362.8	14.0
35 to 44	2,343.0	13.6	49.7	2,372.7	14.0
45 to 54	2,700.3	15.7	49.9	2,711.8	16.0
55 to 64	2,163.8	12.6	50.8	2,093.2	12.4
65 to 74	1,341.4	7.8	52.1	1,232.1	7.3
75 to 84	904.6	5.3	56.5	696.0	4.1
85 and over	435.6	2.5	67.5	210.0	1.2
Total aged 65 and older	2,681.6	15.6	55.6	2,138.0	12.6
Total all age groups	17,191.5	100.0	50.4	16,917.3	100.0

Note: Adjusted for net census undercoverage.

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.

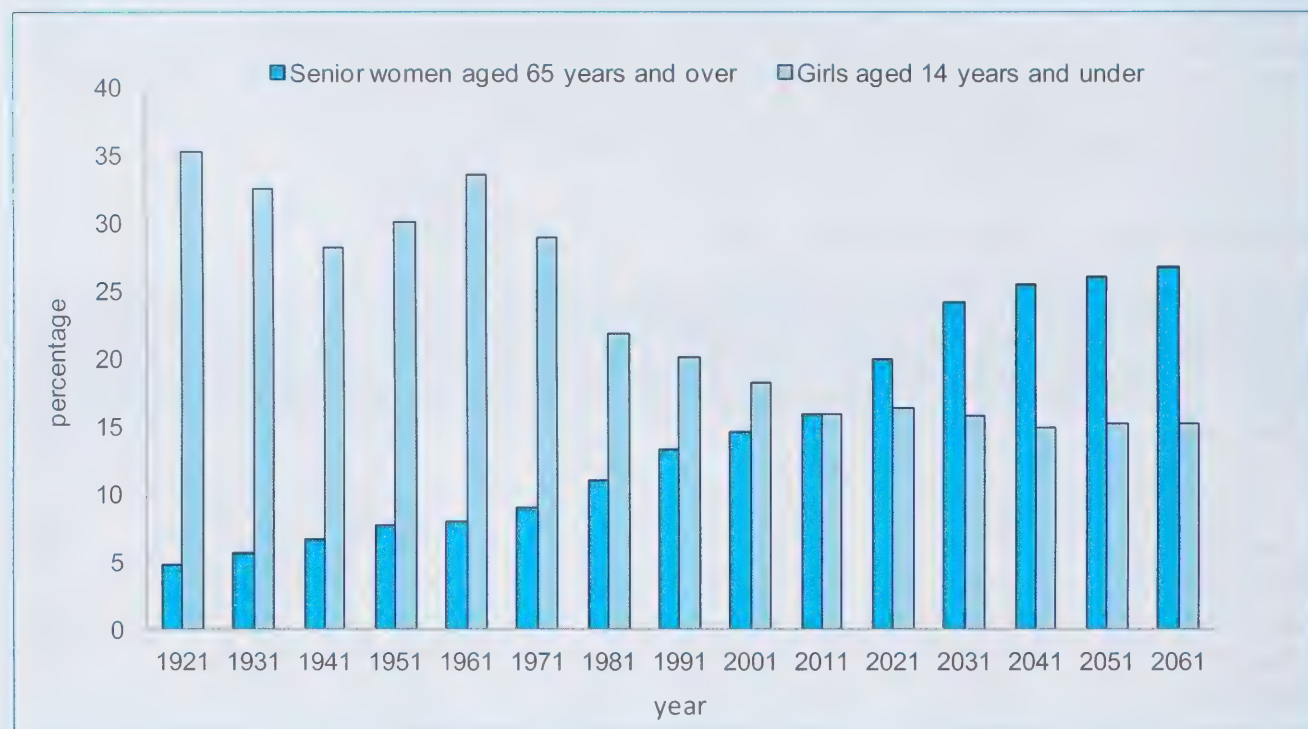
4. U.S. Census Bureau. 2010 International Data Base of Population Estimates and Projections, Midyear population by age and sex. Website: <http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/region.php>. Accessed Nov 29, 2010.

5. Statistics Canada, 2010. *Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories: 2009 to 2036*. Catalogue no. 91-520-X.

Over time, the distribution of women and girls has been shifting to older age groups. As the shares of both senior women and women approaching their senior years grew over time, the share of girls decreased. In 2010, girls aged 14 years and younger accounted for 16% of the female population, identical to the 16% share of senior women aged 65 and older. In comparison, in 1971 young girls aged 14 years and younger accounted for 29% of the female population, more than triple the 8.9% share of senior women. In fact, population aging in Canada is expected to gain momentum between 2011 and 2031, as all people in the baby boom cohort reach their senior years (Chart 1.1). According to the medium-growth scenario of the most recent population projections, senior women may account for about one-quarter of the female population by 2036. In contrast, the share of girls is projected to remain relatively stable throughout the coming decades.

Chart 1.1

Senior women and girls as a percentage of the female population, Canada, 1921 to 2061



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1921 to 1961; and Demography Division, 1971 to 2001; and Projections based on medium-growth scenario (M1), Demography Division, Custom Tabulation, 2011 to 2061.

The overall female and male age distributions in Canada were similar in 2010, with slim but perceptible differences between the youngest age groups and wider differences between the oldest age groups. For example, 48.6% of children under age 10 were girls and 51.4% were boys. In fact the sex ratio at birth, on average, is 105 boys born for every 100 girls. There were roughly equal proportions of females and males in the under-65 age groups in 2010. However, females' greater life expectancy creates a growing disparity throughout the senior years, with women outnumbering men. For the total Canadian population aged 65 years and older, the proportion of women was 56% in 2010, increasing to 67% for those aged 85 and older and to 80% for centenarians. Since the late 1970s, however, gains in life expectancy have been more rapid for men than for women. If the gap in life expectancy continues to narrow, this could eventually result in a more balanced share of women and men in their senior years. See chapter on senior women for more information.

Female population across Canada

In 2010, more than three-fifths of the female population, and a similar share of the male population, were found in just two provinces: Ontario, 39%, and Quebec, 23%. An additional 13% and 11% of women and girls lived in British Columbia and Alberta, respectively (Table 1.3). These four provinces are the most populous in Canada.

Table 1.3
Population, by province and territory, Canada, 2010

Province and territory	Females			Males	
	thousands	%	as a % of the total provincial/ territorial population	thousands	%
Newfoundland and Labrador	259.8	1.5	51.0	249.9	1.5
Prince Edward Island	72.7	0.4	51.1	69.5	0.4
Nova Scotia	485.0	2.8	51.5	457.5	2.7
New Brunswick	382.9	2.2	50.9	368.9	2.2
Quebec	3,986.7	23.2	50.4	3,920.7	23.2
Ontario	6,700.3	39.0	50.7	6,510.4	38.5
Manitoba	620.3	3.6	50.2	615.1	3.6
Saskatchewan	525.0	3.1	50.2	520.6	3.1
Alberta	1,820.5	10.6	48.9	1,900.5	11.2
British Columbia	2,284.2	13.3	50.4	2,246.8	13.3
Yukon	16.9	0.1	49.0	17.6	0.1
Northwest Territories	21.1	0.1	48.3	22.6	0.1
Nunavut	16.0	0.1	48.3	17.2	0.1
Canada	17,191.5	100.0	50.4	16,917.3	100.0

Note: Adjusted for net census undercoverage.

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.

In 2010, the percentage of the total population composed of females was highest in Nova Scotia (51.5%) and was at, or close to, 51% in the other Atlantic provinces. The slightly higher percentage of females in these provinces is likely related to an age structure that is older than that of Canada overall—given that women have a higher life expectancy than men, there are more women at older ages. In contrast, among the provinces, Alberta had the lowest percentage of the population comprised of females, 48.9%, perhaps reflecting the younger age structure in this province and possible in-migration of young adult men for employment opportunities. The territories also had younger age structures than the nation as a whole, largely the result of higher fertility levels. This may partly explain the lower percentages of females in the Northwest Territories (48.3%), Nunavut (48.3%) and Yukon (49.0%). The percentage of females in Quebec (50.4%) and British Columbia (50.4%) was the same as for Canada, while it was slightly higher in Ontario (50.7%).

Most of Canada's population lives in metropolitan areas. As of July 1, 2010, close to seven in ten females, 69.4%, resided in census metropolitan areas⁶. Some census metropolitan areas had a much higher share of females—Saint John, 51.6%, Victoria, 51.6%, Halifax, 51.5%, Peterborough, 51.4% and Trois-Rivières, 51.3% than did others (Table 1.4). The lowest shares of females in the population were found in the two Alberta census metropolitan areas: Calgary, 49.1%; and Edmonton, 49.2%. Again, the age structure of census metropolitan areas may be a key factor: Victoria, for example, had one of the highest proportions of seniors in 2010, while Calgary and Edmonton had among the lowest.

Table 1.4

Percentage of females in the population, by census metropolitan area, Canada, 2010

Census metropolitan area	percentage
Saint John, New Brunswick	51.6
Victoria, British Columbia	51.6
Halifax, Nova Scotia	51.5
Peterborough, Ontario	51.4
Trois-Rivières, Quebec	51.3
St. Catharines–Niagara, Ontario	51.1
Sherbrooke, Quebec	51.1
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador	51.0
Québec, Quebec	51.0
Toronto, Ontario	50.9
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	50.9
Moncton, New Brunswick	50.9
London, Ontario	50.8
Brantford, Ontario	50.8
Hamilton, Ontario	50.8
Greater Sudbury, Ontario	50.8
Kelowna, British Columbia	50.7
Montréal, Quebec	50.7
Regina, Saskatchewan	50.6
Oshawa, Ontario	50.6
Kingston, Ontario	50.6
Vancouver, British Columbia	50.6
Winnipeg, Manitoba	50.5
Thunder Bay, Ontario	50.4
Windsor, Ontario	50.4
Saguenay, Quebec	50.3
Guelph, Ontario	50.3
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan	50.2
Barrie, Ontario	50.1
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo, Ontario	50.1
Abbotsford–Mission, British Columbia	49.9
Edmonton, Alberta	49.2
Calgary, Alberta	49.1

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.

6. Census metropolitan areas are districts including one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a core, with a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the core.

Aboriginal identity⁷

A rising number of women and girls in Canada identify as an Aboriginal person. In 2006, 600,700 women and girls, or 3.8% of the total female population, reported an Aboriginal identity—First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuit—up from 3.3% in 2001 and 2.8% in 1996 (Table 1.5). According to the medium-growth scenario of the most recent projections of the Aboriginal population, it is projected there could be 717,000 females with an Aboriginal identity in 2017.⁸ The largest group of Aboriginal women and girls in 2006 was First Nations, at 60%, followed by Métis, 33%, and Inuit, 4.2%. As well, a small percentage of females reported multiple Aboriginal identities. For males, the percentage reporting an Aboriginal identity, and the distribution by Aboriginal group, was similar to females.

Table 1.5
Population with Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2006

Aboriginal identity	Females			Males	
	thousands	as a % of all females in Canada	as a % of Aboriginal female population	thousands	as a % of all males in Canada
First Nations (North American Indian)	360.0	2.3	59.9	338.1	2.2
Métis	196.3	1.2	32.7	193.5	1.3
Inuit	25.5	0.2	4.2	25.0	0.2
Other ¹	19.0	0.1	3.2	15.5	0.1
Total Aboriginal identity population	600.7	3.8	100.0	572.1	3.7

1. Includes multiple Aboriginal responses and Aboriginal responses not included elsewhere.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

The Aboriginal female population grew 20% from 2001 to 2006, more than triple the 6% growth of Canada's overall female population. In those five years, among the Aboriginal female population, growth was highest for Métis (34%), more than double the growth among First Nations (14%) and Inuit (13%). Growth was similar among the Aboriginal male population. At least some of the Métis population growth may be related to more people identifying themselves as Métis in recent years.⁹

The Aboriginal female population is younger than the non-Aboriginal female population. The median age—which indicates the age at which 50% of the population is older and 50% is younger—of the female population with an Aboriginal identity was 27.7 years in 2006, compared with 40.0 years for the total female population. The median age for the male population was younger (25.2 years for the Aboriginal male population and 38.3 years for the total male population). Younger Aboriginal females account for a considerable share of the Aboriginal population distributed by age: 28% were aged 14 and younger in 2006 (as were 31% of Aboriginal males). An additional 18% of the Aboriginal female population was aged 15 to 24 (18% of Aboriginal males). About one in twenty Aboriginal females (5.1%) were aged 65 and older (4.5% of Aboriginal males).

Within the total female population of each province and territory, the three territories had the largest shares of Aboriginal people in the female population in 2006, followed by Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. In Nunavut, 86% of women and girls reported an Aboriginal identity, as did 52% of females in the Northwest Territories and 26% in the Yukon. Among the provinces, Manitoba had the highest share of females with Aboriginal identity (16%), followed by Saskatchewan (15%) and Alberta (5.9%).

7. With the exception of the last section on religious affiliation and religiosity, the data in the remainder of this chapter are based on census data, unless otherwise specified.

8. Statistics Canada. 2005. *Projections of the Aboriginal populations, Canada, provinces and territories, 2001 to 2017*. Catalogue no. 91-547-XIE.

9. Statistics Canada. 2008. *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada in 2006: Inuit, Métis and First Nations, 2006 Census*. Catalogue no. 97-558-XIE.

In 2006, most of the First Nations female population resided in Ontario, 23%, British Columbia, 18%, and Manitoba, 14%, while the Métis female population lived primarily in Alberta, (22%), Ontario (19%) and Manitoba (18%). Of the female population who identified as Inuit, close to half (48%) lived in Nunavut, 22% in Quebec and 9.2% in Newfoundland and Labrador.

More than half (55%) of Aboriginal women and girls lived in metropolitan areas, 25% on reserves and 20% in rural areas. See chapter on the Aboriginal female population for more information.

Immigrant status

Canada's female population is becoming more diverse over time. According to the 2006 Census, 3.2 million females, 20% of the total female population, were immigrants,¹⁰ up from 19% in 2001 and 14% in 1951 (Chart 1.2). According to recent projections of the diversity of the Canadian population, and based on the reference scenario, the share of immigrant women and girls living in Canada could increase to 22% by 2011 and to 27% by 2031.¹¹ During the five years from 2001 to 2006, the female population who were immigrants grew 14%, more than twice the pace of Canada's total female population, 5.6%.

Chart 1.2

Immigrant females as a percentage of the total female population, Canada, 1921 to 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1921 to 2006.

10. The census data used in this section are for the immigrant population, some of whom have resided in Canada for many years, while others have arrived recently. These data include a small number of immigrants born in Canada and exclude non-permanent residents.

11. Statistics Canada. Demography Division. Custom tabulation. The projected population is based on the immigrant population which excludes non-permanent residents and Canadians born abroad.

In 2006, census data showed that 18% of immigrant females had arrived in Canada during the previous five years, and another 27% during the years 1991 to 2000. About 55% of the immigrant female population had arrived prior to 1991. The distribution of the immigrant male population was similar.

Among the immigrant female population, the primary country of birth based on 2006 Census data was China, 7.9%. Asian and Middle Eastern countries were the primary region of birth, 41%, followed by Europe, 36%, Central and South America, the Caribbean and Bermuda, 12%, and Africa, 5.6%.

Of the 252,000 immigrants admitted to Canada in 2009, 52% were females.¹² Most immigrant women entering Canada in 2009 were admitted in the economic category (58%), which includes entering as principal applicants or accompanying dependants of skilled workers, business immigrants, live-in caregivers, or provincial/territorial nominees. The second largest category was the family class (29%) comprising spouses, partners, children and other relatives of Canadian residents, such as parents or grandparents, who are sponsored by family members or close relatives in Canada. Thirdly, refugees (8.6%) include government-assisted or privately sponsored refugees as well as refugees landed in Canada and dependents abroad. Finally, 'other immigrants' (4.2%) include those admitted for humanitarian, compassionate or public policy reasons, which can include holders of temporary resident permits, immigrants facing deferred removal orders and post-refugee claimants. The corresponding percentages for males were close to those for females: 64%, 22%, 9.5% and 4.3%.

Generation status can also be used as an indicator of the diversity of the population. Some females are born outside of Canada (first generation), some are born in Canada but have at least one parent born outside Canada (second generation) and some are born in Canada with both parents also born in Canada (third or higher generation).¹³ Based on 2006 Census data, 60% of women aged 15 and older were born in Canada from two Canadian-born parents, 16% were Canadian-born with at least one parent born outside Canada, and 24% were born outside Canada. A similar pattern held for men. See chapter on the immigrant female population for more information.

Females belonging to visible minority groups

The 2006 Census counted 2.6 million females living in Canada who belonged to a visible minority group.¹⁴ This represented 16% of all women and girls living in Canada, similar to the share of males (Table 1.6). The two largest groups among the females who reported a visible minority status in 2006 were Chinese and South Asian (24% each). The third largest group was Black (16%) followed by Filipina (9.0%), Arab and West Asian (7.6%), Latin American (6.0%) and Southeast Asian (4.7%).

12. Data in this paragraph are from Citizenship and Immigration Canada. 2010. *Facts and Figures 2009*.

13. In the 2006 Census, the first generation includes immigrants, non-permanent residents and a small number of people born outside Canada to parents who are Canadian citizens by birth. For more information, see the *2006 Census Dictionary*.

14. The term 'visible minority' is defined in the *Employment Equity Act* as "persons, other than Aboriginal people, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour." Under this definition, regulations specify the following as visible minority groups: Chinese, South Asians, Blacks, Arabs, West Asians, Filipinos, Southeast Asians, Latin Americans, Japanese, Koreans and other visible minority groups, such as Pacific Islanders.

Table 1.6
Population belonging to visible minority groups, Canada, 2006

Visible minority group	Females				Males		
	thousands	as a % of all females	as a % of all females who belong to a visible minority group	as a % of visible minority group	thousands	as a % of all males	as a % of all males who belong to a visible minority group
Chinese	632.3	4.0	24.3	52.0	584.3	3.8	23.7
South Asian	625.7	3.9	24.0	49.5	637.2	4.2	25.9
Black	408.1	2.6	15.7	52.1	375.7	2.5	15.2
Filipino	235.1	1.5	9.0	57.2	175.6	1.1	7.1
Latin American	156.3	1.0	6.0	51.4	147.9	1.0	6.0
Southeast Asian	123.5	0.8	4.7	51.5	116.4	0.8	4.7
Arab and West Asian	199.0	1.3	7.6	47.1	223.3	1.5	9.1
Korean	73.3	0.5	2.8	51.7	68.6	0.4	2.8
Japanese	45.1	0.3	1.7	55.5	36.2	0.2	1.5
Other visible minority	37.6	0.2	1.4	52.6	33.8	0.2	1.4
Multiple visible minority groups	68.1	0.4	2.6	51.1	65.1	0.4	2.6
Total visible minority population	2,604.1	16.4	100.0	51.4	2,464.0	16.1	100.0
Total non-visible minority population	13,310.7	83.6	...	...	12,862.2	83.9	...
Total population	15,914.8	100.0	...	...	15,326.3	100.0	...

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Within specific visible minority groups, the share of females and males was comparable for some groups while for other groups, females were either overrepresented or underrepresented. For example, 57% of Filipinos were females, whereas among Arabs and West Asians, the female population represented 46% of the population.

The number of women and girls belonging to a visible minority group increased 28% from 2001 to 2006 while the female population who did not belong to a visible minority group rose 2.1%. In 2006, more than two-thirds (68%) of the female population reporting a visible minority status were immigrants, slightly higher than the corresponding percentage for males (65%). Immigration from non-European countries has risen, contributing to the increase in the visible minority population.

The proportion of immigrants varies among some of the visible minority groups. According to the 2006 Census, more than seven in ten females who were Chinese (74%), Arab or West Asians (73%), Latin American (73%), Filipina (72%) and Korean (71%) were immigrants. Much lower percentages of females who were Japanese (33%) and Black (55%) were immigrants, reflecting the long history of these groups in Canada.

The female population who belongs to visible minority groups is expected to increase which would increase ethno-cultural diversity in Canada. According to the reference scenario of the most recent projections of population diversity,¹⁵ by 2011 there may be 3.4 million females in Canada who belong to a visible minority group, making up 20% of females living in Canada. By 2031, about 6.6 million females living in Canada, or 31%, may belong to a visible minority group. See chapter on the female population belonging to visible minority groups for more information.

15. Statistics Canada. Demography Division. Custom Tabulation.

Residential mobility

The distribution of women and girls living throughout Canada changes over time because of movement between provinces and territories as well as within them. In the five years from 2001 to 2006, 41% of females aged 5 years and older made at least one residential move—that is, they lived at a different address in 2006 than in 2001. This represents more than 6 million females in this age group who moved in the five years prior to the 2006 Census, similar to the pattern for males (Table 1.7).

Table 1.7
Residential moves within the previous five years, Canada, 2006

Move	Females		Males	
	thousands	%	thousands	%
Moved within same municipality ¹	3,326.7	22.1	3,181.2	22.0
Moved to a different municipality ¹ within province	1,829.6	12.1	1,737.2	12.0
Moved between provinces/territories	426.9	2.8	425.7	2.9
External migrant	595.8	3.9	564.3	3.9
Total movers	6,179.1	41.0	5,908.3	40.9
Total non-movers	8,906.8	59.0	8,550.4	59.1
Total	15,085.9	100.0	14,458.6	100.0

1. Municipality is also known as a census subdivision.

Note: Population aged five years and older.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

More than half (54%) of the females aged 5 and older who made a residential move within the five years prior to the 2006 Census did so within their same municipality. Thirty percent of females who moved did so to different municipalities but within the same province, almost 7% moved to different provinces, and almost 10% came from a different country. These proportions are similar among the male population. Women aged 25 to 34 years were the most mobile: 73% changed residence, compared with 26% or less of women aged 45 or older. Women in their late twenties and early thirties might move because of educational pursuits, employment opportunities or relationship formation, among other reasons.

Languages spoken

For most of Canada's females, their mother tongue—the language first learned and still understood—is one of the official languages, English or French. In 2006, 58% reported English as their mother tongue, and 22% reported French (Table 1.8). The pattern was similar among the male population. In 2006, an additional 20% of the female population, or 3.2 million women and girls, were 'allophones'—their mother tongue was neither English nor French. The number of allophone females rose 19% from 2001 to 2006, compared with 3.1% for those whose mother tongue was English and 1.7% for those whose mother tongue was French.

Table 1.8
Mother tongue, Canada, 2006

Mother tongue ¹	Females			Males		
	thousands	%	as a % change 2001 to	thousands	%	as a % change 2001 to
			2006			2006
English	9,049.7	57.6	3.1	8,833.1	58.4	3.1
French	3,492.1	22.2	1.7	3,325.5	22.0	1.7
Non-official language	3,171.2	20.2	19.0	2,976.7	19.7	17.3
Total	15,713.0	100.0	...	15,135.3	100.0	...

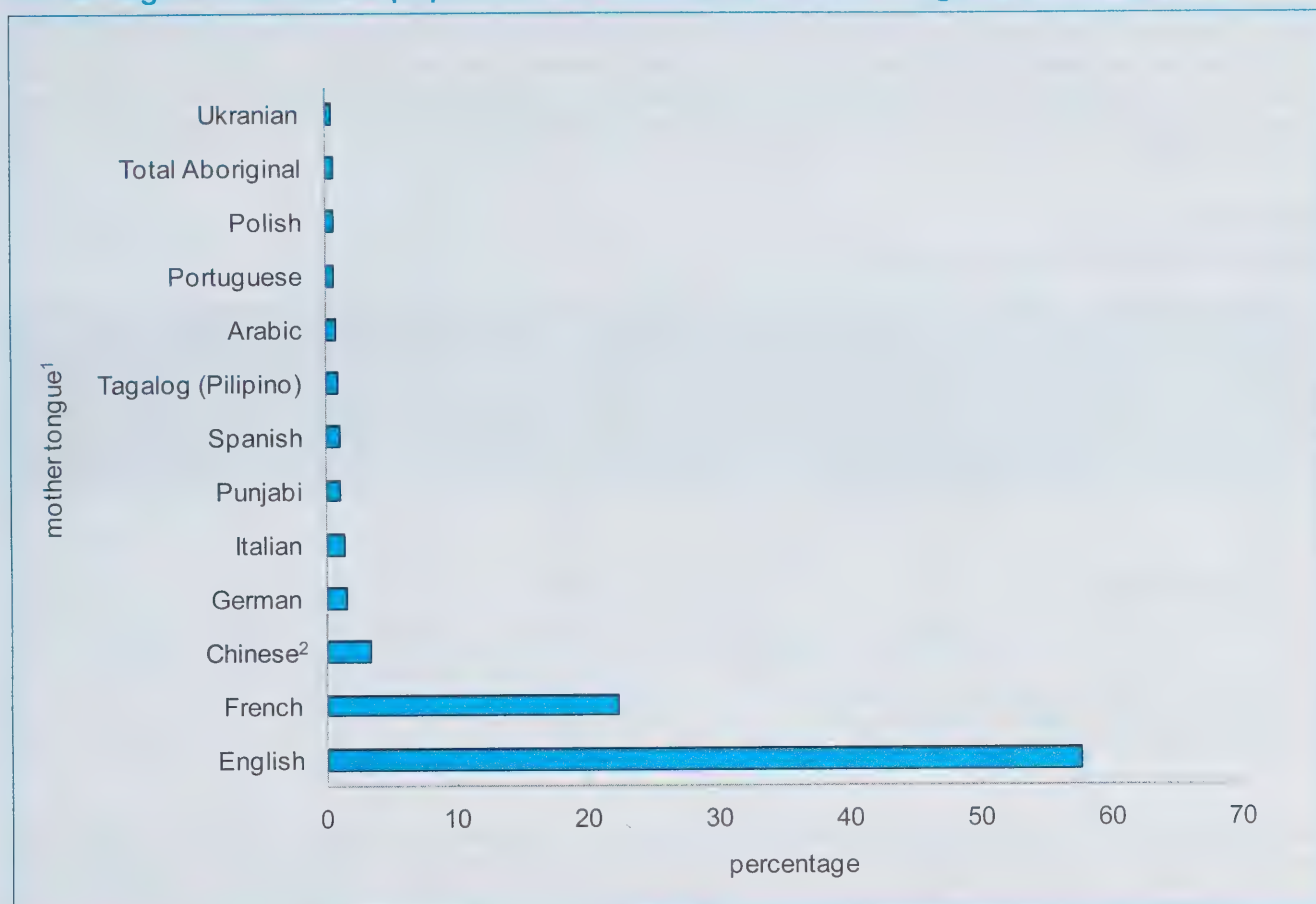
1. Includes only single responses.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Among females whose mother tongue was neither English nor French, Chinese (a grouping of Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka, Taiwanese and other Chinese languages) was predominant. More than half a million women and girls living in Canada, or 3.4% of the female population, reported a Chinese language as their mother tongue (Chart 1.3). Other non-official mother tongues, each with shares of 1.5% or less, included German, Italian, Punjabi and Spanish.

Chart 1.3

Percentage of the female population with selected mother tongues, Canada, 2006



1. Includes only single responses.

2. Chinese language includes Cantonese, Chaochow (Teochow), Fukien, Hakka, Mandarin, Shanghainese, Taiwanese and other.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Knowledge of official languages refers to the ability to conduct a conversation in one or both official languages. Most of the women and girls living in Canada in 2006, like most men and boys, spoke an official language, either English only (67%) or French only (14%); an additional 17% were bilingual—they could speak both English and French (Table 1.9). About 2% of the female population did not have sufficient knowledge of either English or French to conduct a conversation.

Table 1.9

Knowledge of official languages, Canada, 2006

Knowledge of official languages	Females			Males		
	thousands	%	as a % change 2001 to 2006	thousands	%	as a % change 2001 to 2006
English only	10,622.8	66.7	5.7	10,507.2	68.6	5.4
French only	2,226.6	14.0	4.7	1,915.3	12.5	5.2
English and French	2,750.0	17.3	4.6	2,698.9	17.6	3.7
Neither English nor French	315.4	2.0	16.1	204.9	1.3	17.4
Total	15,914.8	100.0	...	15,326.3	100.0	...

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Similar to the pattern for mother tongue and knowledge of official languages, most females spoke only one language at home in 2006 (Table 1.10), predominantly English (66%), followed by French (21%) and non-official languages (11%). The most common non-official languages spoken at home in 2006 were Chinese languages (23%), followed by European languages such as Spanish, Italian and Portuguese (16%) then Indo-Aryan languages such as Punjabi, Urdu, Gujarati and Hindi (15%). However, almost 300,000 women and girls regularly spoke two or more languages at home, primarily English and a non-official language (206,000), English and French (about 49,700), French and a non-official language (30,000) and English, French plus a non-official language (8,400).

Table 1.10
Home language, Canada, 2006

Home language ¹	Females			Males		
	thousands	%	as a % growth 2001 to 2006	thousands	%	as a % growth 2001 to 2006
English	10,451.7	65.7	4.3	10,133.1	66.1	3.9
French	3,374.4	21.2	2.5	3,233.8	21.1	2.5
Non-official language	1,794.7	11.3	20.8	1,677.4	10.9	19.6
Other ²	294.0	1.8	8.4	282.0	1.8	9.8
Total	15,914.8	100.0	...	15,326.3	100.0	...

1. Refers to the language most often spoken in the home.

2. Includes more than one language spoken at home.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Regardless of their knowledge of languages, 98% of women aged 15 years and older in Canada used only one language at work in 2006. Within the work environment, the language they used most was English, 76%, followed by French, 20%, and other non-official languages, 1.5%. Only 2% of women spoke more than one language at work, of which 123,500 spoke English and French. The percentages were similar for men.

Religious affiliation and religiosity¹⁶

Most women in Canada have a religious affiliation. According to the 2008 General Social Survey, more than 11 million women aged 15 years and older reported being affiliated with a particular religious group, as did close to 10 million men. In 2008, 40% of all women identified themselves as Catholic, 24% as one of the other Christian denominations such as United Church, Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran Baptist, or Christian Orthodox. About 5% of women in Canada reported affiliation with Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, or Sikh religions.

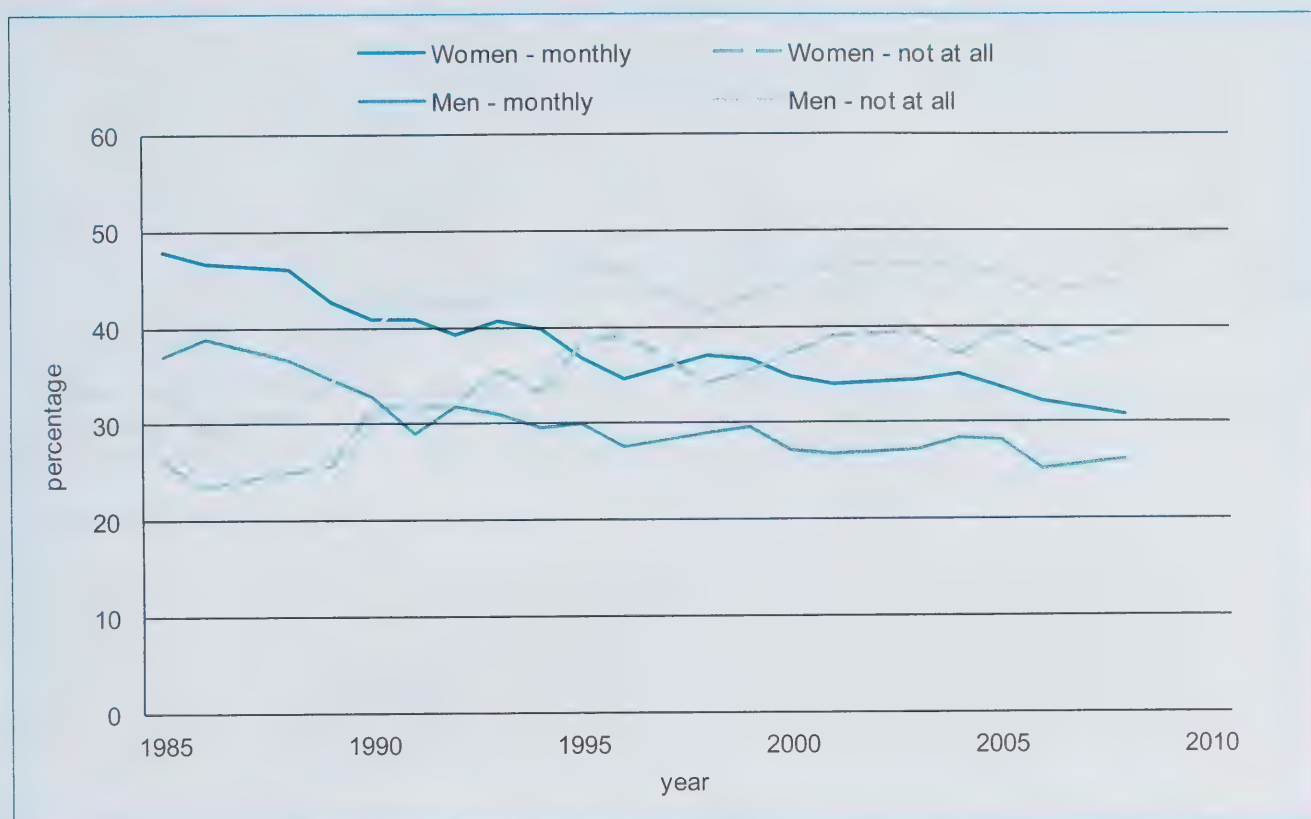
The proportion of people reporting no religious affiliation has been gradually rising, among both women and men. In 2003, 16% of women aged 15 years and older reported no religious affiliation; by 2008, that share rose to 20%. A higher proportion of men reported no religious affiliation: 22% in 2003 and 26% in 2008. However, when asked if their religious or spiritual beliefs were important in the way they live their life, 42% of women responded in 2008 that it was "very important", as did 31% of men; 13% of women and 21% of men indicated that "it was not important at all."

Women's attendance at religious services has been decreasing over the past two decades. In 2008, 31% of women attended a religious service at least once a month, down from 37% in 1998 and 46% in 1988 (Chart 1.4). A higher percentage of women than men attended religious services at least monthly. For men, their attendance fell from 37% in 1988 to 26% in 2008.

16. Data in this section are from the General Social Survey.

Chart 1.4

Religious attendance in the previous 12 months, Canada, 1985 to 2008



Notes: "Monthly" refers to attendance at religious services at least once a month during the previous 12 months. "Not at all" indicates not attending religious services at all during the previous 12 months. Prior to 2005, the General Social Survey did not ask those who had no religious affiliation about the frequency of attending religious services and they were assumed to have not attended. In 2006 and 2008, all respondents were asked about frequency of attendance. In 2008, about 80% of those with no religious affiliation did not attend and 16% attended infrequently.

Sources: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1985 to 2008.

Religious attendance also varies by age with higher attendance for older age groups than younger age groups. For women aged 15 to 29 years, 23% attended a religious service once a month or more which differed little from men in this age group. For women and men aged 60 years and older, the percentages were 45% and 38%, respectively.

Chapter 2

Families, Living Arrangements and Unpaid Work

by Anne Milan, Leslie-Anne Keown and Covadonga Robles Urquijo

Most women in Canada live as part of a family although they may experience a number of different living arrangements over the course of their lives. This chapter examines the family context and living arrangements of women. For those living in couples, it looks at whether they are in legal marriages or common-law unions, in opposite-sex or same-sex couples, and whether or not they have children present. Female lone-parent families are also analysed, as well as other arrangements such as living alone or with non-relatives.

Patterns related to births, marriages and divorces are explored, as are family characteristics and living arrangements of immigrant women and visible minority women. Finally, the area of unpaid work is examined, specifically the care of household children, domestic work and volunteering.¹⁷

Most women live as part of couples

According to the 2006 Census,¹⁸ the majority of Canadians in private households lived in a family context either as a child, as part of a couple, as a lone parent or with other relatives (86% of females and 87% of males). Among children aged 14 and under, nearly all of the 2.7 million girls lived with married, common-law or lone parents. About 14,000 of these girls lived with their grandparents (without their parents present),¹⁹ while 22,500 lived in private households with relatives other than parents or grandparents or with non-relatives. The patterns were similar for boys. Because there is little diversity in the living arrangements of girls, the rest of this chapter will focus primarily on women aged 15 and over.

In 2006, about 10.8 million women aged 15 and over (83%) lived either in a census family, as a married spouse, common-law partner, lone parent or child,²⁰ or in a household with other relatives. The majority of women (57%) lived as part of a couple (Table 2.1). Over six million women (47%) lived with their married spouse and almost 1.4 million (10%) lived with their common-law partner.

17. There is no information given in this chapter on unpaid work done for non-household members. Further information on care provided to non-household members will be available upon the release of the 2012 General Social Survey which focuses on caregiving.

18. With the exception of the section on living in collective dwellings, the census data in this chapter refer to the population in private households unless otherwise specified.

19. Children in census families include those with parents as well as those living with their grandparents and without parents present, known as skip-generation families. See the concept of census family in the *2006 Census Dictionary* for more information.

20. In this chapter, the term 'child', as part of the census family concept, refers to daughters and sons who do not have a spouse, common-law partner or children of their own in the same household. See the concept of census family in the *2006 Census Dictionary* for more information.

Table 2.1**Women and men aged 15 years and over, by living arrangements, Canada, 2006**

Living arrangement	Women			Men		
	thousands	%	as a %	thousands	%	as a %
			growth 2001 to 2006			growth 2001 to 2006
All living arrangements	13,116.7	100.0	7.2	12,395.1	100.0	7.1
In a couple	7,478.7	57.0	6.0	7,486.9	60.4	6.0
With married spouse	6,105.4	46.5	3.5	6,106.5	49.3	3.5
With common-law partner	1,373.3	10.5	18.9	1,380.4	11.1	18.8
Lone parents	1,132.3	8.6	6.3	281.8	2.3	14.6
As children	1,871.5	14.3	9.5	2,347.8	18.9	7.0
With relatives ¹	360.6	2.7	11.6	245.3	2.0	12.5
With non-relatives only	428.5	3.3	5.4	551.6	4.4	2.3
Alone	1,845.3	14.1	10.5	1,481.8	12.0	13.4

1. These households may also contain non-relatives. See *2006 Census Dictionary* for more information on census family concepts.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

The percentage of women living as part of a couple was highest for those in their late thirties, when close to three-quarters (74%) lived with a spouse or partner (Table 2.2). For men, living as part of a couple peaked at age 65 to 69 (81%). In comparison, about three-fifths of women in their late sixties (63%) were in a couple. By age 80 years and over, one-fifth (22%) of women were part of a couple as were two-thirds (66%) of men. Higher life expectancy for both women and men (although women continue to live longer than men) means that both sexes can potentially remain in couples for a longer duration throughout their senior years.

Table 2.2**Population in couples by age group and sex, Canada, 2006**

Age group	Women	Men
	percentage	
15 to 19	2.6	0.9
20 to 24	23.2	12.6
25 to 29	54.5	42.2
30 to 34	70.6	64.9
35 to 39	73.7	72.1
40 to 44	73.4	73.5
45 to 49	73.2	74.6
50 to 54	72.5	76.5
55 to 59	70.9	78.7
60 to 64	68.1	80.1
65 to 69	62.7	80.7
70 to 74	54.9	79.0
75 to 79	42.1	76.2
80 and over	22.3	65.7

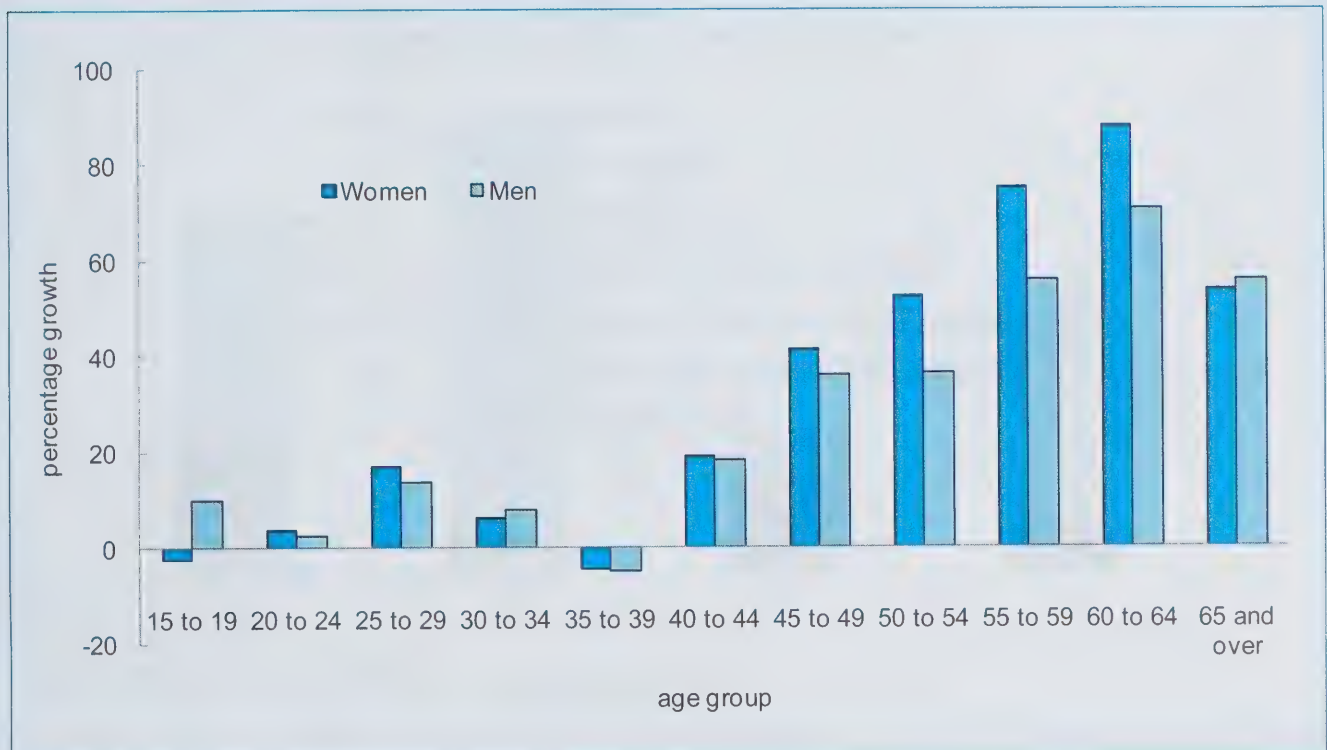
Source: Milan, A., M. Vézina and C. Wells. 2007. *Family portrait: Continuity and change in Canadian families and households in 2006: 2006 Census*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 97-553-X.

Women in common-law unions increasing

Most women in couples were married (82%) while the remainder were in common-law unions (18%). However, the number of women in common-law unions steadily increased over the last few decades, likely reflecting the greater social acceptance of this living arrangement. In the five years prior to 2006, the number of women in married couples rose 3.5%, while those in common-law unions grew at more than five times that pace (19%). During this period, growth of common-law unions increased most rapidly for women in their early sixties (88%), although the overall number of women in these unions remained relatively low. Growth for men living in common-law unions was also high in this age group, at 70% (Chart 2.1).

Chart 2.1

Percentage growth of women and men in common-law couples, by age group, Canada, 2001 to 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

A number of factors could account for the growth of common-law unions within older age groups. In general, there was an increased growth for all living arrangements due to the sheer size of the baby-boom cohort, aged approximately 41 to 60 in 2006. From 2001 to 2006, the numbers of women and men in married couples also grew for all age groups over the age of 45, but much less than those of common-law partners. There may be a growing acceptance among older generations of what has been primarily a living arrangement among young adults. As well, women and men who began living common-law when younger may remain in this living arrangement as they grow older. Following the dissolution of an earlier marriage, a growing number of people may choose to live common-law in subsequent relationships. This suggests that individuals may still want to be part of a couple, but not necessarily a marriage.²¹

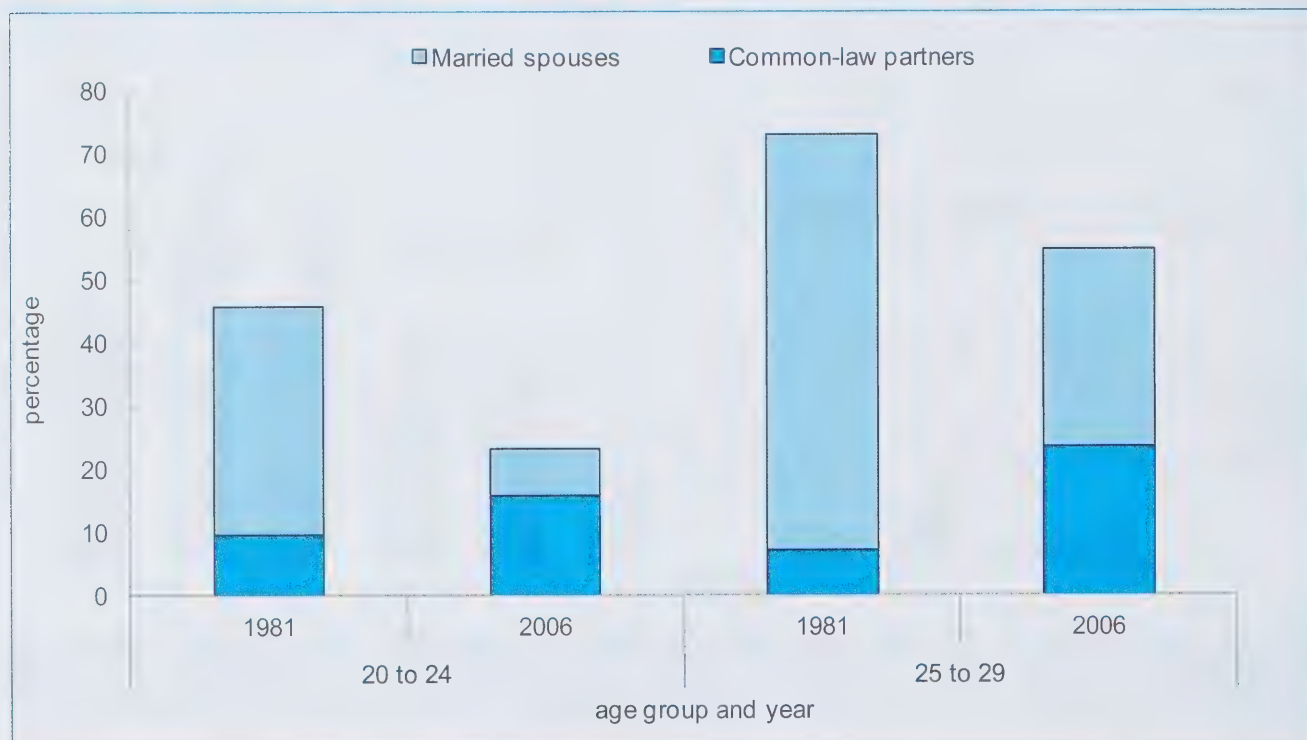
In contrast, the number of people aged 35 to 39—part of the baby-buster cohort that followed the baby-boomers—declined between 2001 and 2006, and there was a corresponding decline in the number of people in common-law unions (a drop of 4.5% for women in this age group).

21. For more information, see: Milan, A., M. Vézina and C. Wells. 2007. *Family portrait: Continuity and change in Canadian families and households in 2006: 2006 Census*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 97-553-X.

Most women and men who lived in common-law unions in 2006 were young. The largest share of women living with a common-law partner was among 25- to 29-year-olds (23%), more than triple their share in 1981 (7.1%). Despite the higher percentage of women in their late twenties living with a common-law partner, it did not compensate for the much larger decrease of married women. Consequently, the overall share of women 25- to 29-year-old in couples declined from 73% in 1981 to 55% in 2006, largely owing to the drop in married women from 66% in 1981 to 31% in 2006 (Chart 2.2). A similar pattern holds for men in this age group, although their overall share in couples was lower (64% in 1981 and 42% in 2006). Fewer women in their early twenties were in couples in both 1981 and 2006, but like women in their late twenties, there was a drop in married women and an increase in women in common-law unions. In 2006, the majority of 20- to 24-year-old women in couples were in common-law unions.

Chart 2.2

Women aged 20 to 29 years in couples, by age group, Canada, 1981 and 2006



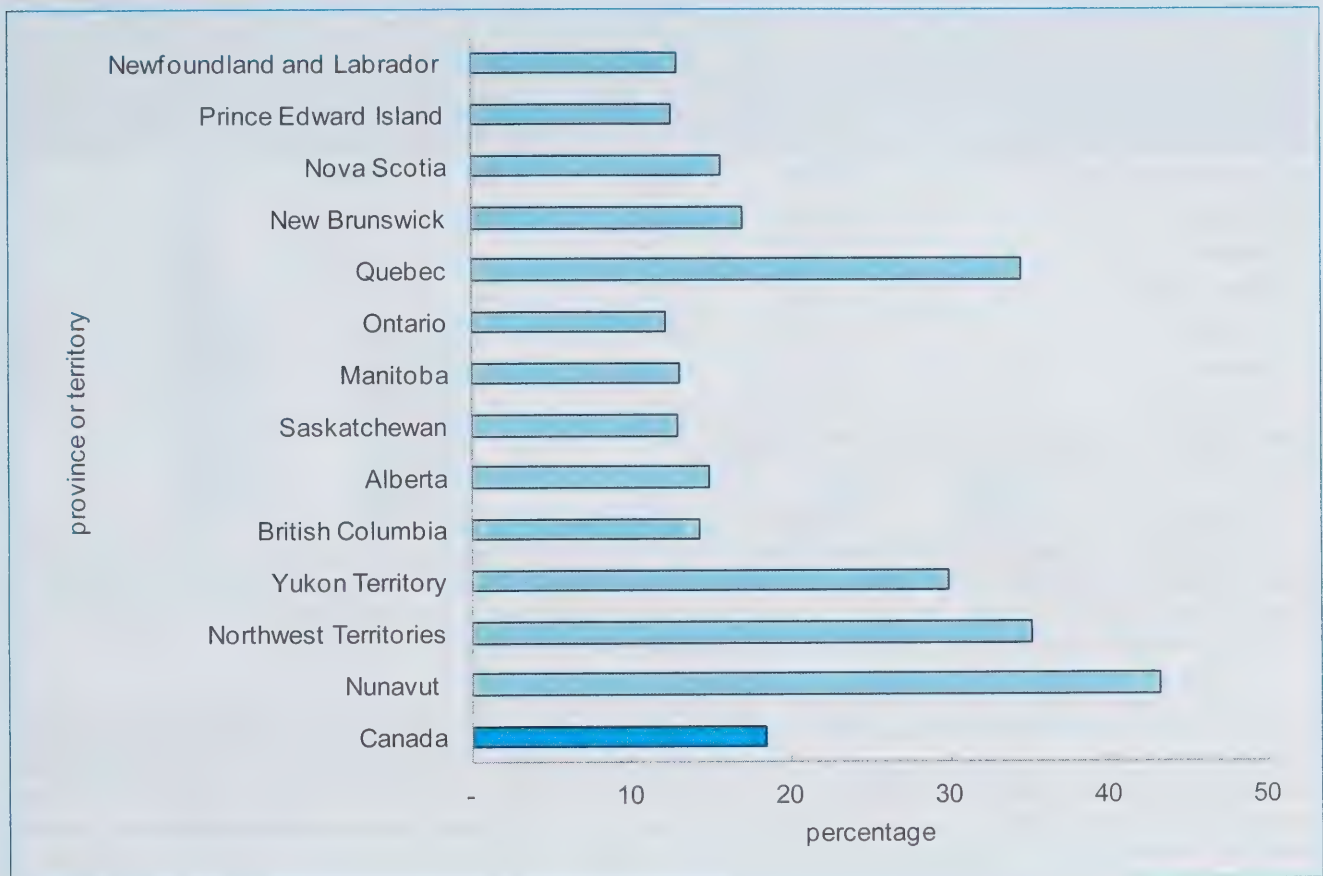
Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1981 and 2006.

Living in common-law unions is more predominant in some parts of Canada than others (Chart 2.3). In 2006, the percentage of women in couples living with a common-law partner in Quebec (35%) was almost double that for Canada as a whole (18%). The greater popularity of common-law unions in Quebec, compared with elsewhere in Canada, may have its roots in the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s. During this period, the historical influence of the Catholic Church on family life began to wane, and the transition toward a more secular society occurred in conjunction with the growth of the women's movement, increased access to contraception and a broadened divorce legislation.²² The share of women in couples who were in common-law unions was also large in the territories in 2006, particularly Nunavut (43%) and the Northwest Territories (35%).

22. Péron, Y. 2003. "Du mariage obligatoire au mariage facultatif", in Piché, V. and C. Le Bourdais. *La démographie québécoise. Enjeux du XXI^e siècle*. Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal. Chapter 3, p. 110 to 143.

Chart 2.3

Women living common-law as a percentage of all women in couples, Canada, provinces and territories, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Women in same-sex couples a growing minority

The majority of women living in couples are in opposite-sex couples. The 2001 Census was the first to enumerate same-sex common-law couples and at that time, 30,400 women were in such unions. Same-sex marriage was first legalized in the provinces of Ontario and British Columbia in 2003 and for Canada as a whole, in 2005. In 2006, about 41,200 women were in same-sex couples, either married or common-law (Table 2.3). Of this number, 6,900 women were in a same-sex married couple, representing 17% of all women in same-sex unions.

Table 2.3**Women and men in couples, by couple status, Canada, 2006**

Couple status	Women			Men		
	thousands	%	as a % growth 2001 to 2006	thousands	%	as a % growth 2001 to 2006
All persons in couples	7,478.7	100.0	6.0	7,486.9	100.0	6.0
Same-sex	41.2	0.6	35.5	49.5	0.7	30.2
Married ¹	6.9	0.1	..	8.0	0.1	..
Common-law	34.3	0.5	12.8	41.5	0.6	9.1
Opposite-sex	7,437.4	99.4	5.9	7,437.4	99.3	5.9
Married	6,098.4	81.5	3.3	6,098.4	81.5	3.3
Common-law	1,339.0	17.9	19.1	1,339.0	17.9	19.1

1. Data on same-sex married spouses were first collected in 2006.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Women living in a same-sex union represented 0.6% of all women in couples in Canada in 2006 (or 41,200), while the 49,500 men living in a same-sex union accounted for 0.7% of all men in couples. The majority of women in same-sex relationships, or 57%, were younger than 45 years compared with 45% of similarly aged women in opposite-sex couples. For men, the percentages were 59% and 38%, respectively.

In 2006, 16% of women in same-sex couples had children aged 24 and under present in the home, a smaller share than for women in opposite-sex unions (49%) but a much higher percentage than for men in same-sex couples (2.9%). The percentage of people in same-sex couples with children was higher for those who were married than for those who were living in a common-law relationship. About one-quarter (24%) of same-sex married women had children, compared with 15% of women in same-sex common-law couples. For men in same-sex unions, 9.0% of same-sex married men had children living with them, as did 1.7% of men with a same-sex common-law partner.

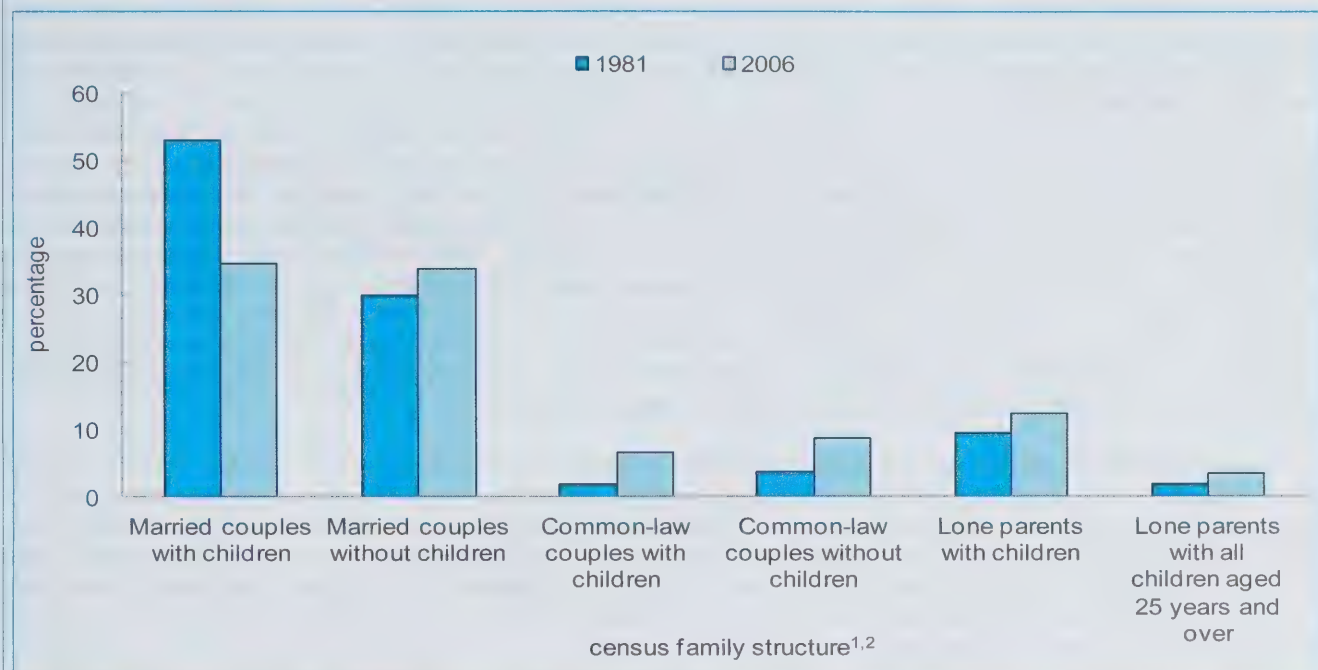
Couples with children declining over time

In Canada, there were 8.9 million families in 2006. Of these, 84% were couple families, which included married couples (69%) and common-law couples (15%). There were also just over 1.4 million lone-parent families, accounting for 16% of all families. Twenty-five years earlier, in 1981, there had been 6.3 million families, of which 83% were married couples, 5.6% were common-law couples, and 11% were lone-parent families.¹

A large number of families living in Canada have children living at home, but the share has been decreasing for at least the last several decades. For the first time in 2006, there were slightly more couples without children in the home (43% of all families) than couples with children (41% of all families). In 1981, these figures were 34% and 55%, respectively. (see box chart 2.1)

1. Historical comparisons for census families, particularly lone-parent families, must be interpreted with caution due to conceptual changes in 2001.

Note: Couples with children include married- or common-law-couple families with children; these refer to census families with at least one child aged 24 and under present in the home. Married- or common-law-couple families without children include those where all children are aged 25 and over.

Box Chart 2.1**Percentage of census families with and without children, by census family structure, Canada, 1981 and 2006**

1. Census families with children refer to children aged 24 years and under present in the home. Census families without children also include families with all children aged 25 years and over.

2. Historical comparisons for census families, particularly lone-parent families, must be interpreted with caution due to conceptual changes in 2001.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1981 and 2006.

Canada's aging population might partially explain this decrease in couple families with children at home. Many baby-boomers—the large cohort born between 1946 and 1965 which has influenced many demographic trends—are more likely to have married and to have adult children who now live independently. In fact, married spouses without children had an older median age¹ (60.8 years) in 2006 compared with married spouses with children (43.4 years).² The following cohort, the baby-busters—born during the period of 1966 to 1974—experienced lower fertility rates. This combination of aging baby boomers and the low fertility rate of the baby-busters, contributed to the decrease observed in the last 25 years in the share of married-couple families with children living at home.

On the other hand, there was an increase in common-law couples with children, as a share of all families during the same period, from 1981 to 2006. However, since most couples are married, the decrease in married couples with children offset the increase in common-law couples with children. The result was an overall decline in couples with children.

Notes:

1. Median age refers to the age at which half of the population is older and half is younger.

2. Milan, A., M. Vézina and C. Wells. 2007. *Family portrait: Continuity and change in Canadian families and households in 2006: 2006 Census*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 97-553-X.

Share of female lone-parent families remains stable in recent years

Lone-parent families can be formed as a result of divorce, separation, death or having a child outside of a union. There may be a parent in another household who remains financially and/or emotionally involved in the lives of his or her children, and with whom the child may live on a part-time basis. There were about four times as many female lone-parent families (1.1 million) as male lone-parent families (281,800) in 2006, a fairly consistent ratio over the past several decades. However, from 2001 to 2006, male lone-parent families grew more rapidly (15%) than did female lone-parent families (6.3%). In 2006, female lone-parent families represented 13% of all families, the same share as in 2001.

In 2006, about half (50%) of female lone parents were divorced or separated,²³ 30% had never been legally married and one-fifth (20%) were widowed. Twenty-five years earlier, in 1981, a higher percentage of female lone parents were divorced or separated (56%), more were widowed (33%), and fewer were never-married (11%). This change in the marital status of lone parents reflects the increasing number of divorces as well as separations among never-married partners in common-law unions; it also reflects a greater acceptance of births outside marriage. Prior to the 1968 *Divorce Act*, which introduced no-fault divorce following separation of three years or more, divorce was a relatively uncommon path to lone parenthood. There was a large increase in the number of divorces following this legislation, and again in the late 1980s following the 1985 *Divorce Act* amendment which reduced the minimum separation period to one year.

Female lone-parent families made up about 18% of all families with children under aged 24 and under,²⁴ in both 2001 and 2006. In comparison, male lone-parent families accounted for 4.7% of such families in 2006, up slightly from 4.2% in 2001. A higher percentage of female than male lone-parent families had children under age six in 2006 (15% of all female lone-parent families with children aged 24 and under compared with 11% of male lone-parent families). In 2001, these figures were 18% and 12%, respectively. Female lone-parents were also younger than male lone-parents—the median age of female lone-parents with children aged 24 and under was 41.7 years in 2006 and for male lone-parents, it was 45.5 years.

23. Also includes a small percentage of lone parents who reported they were married, spouse absent for both the 1981 and 2006 figures.

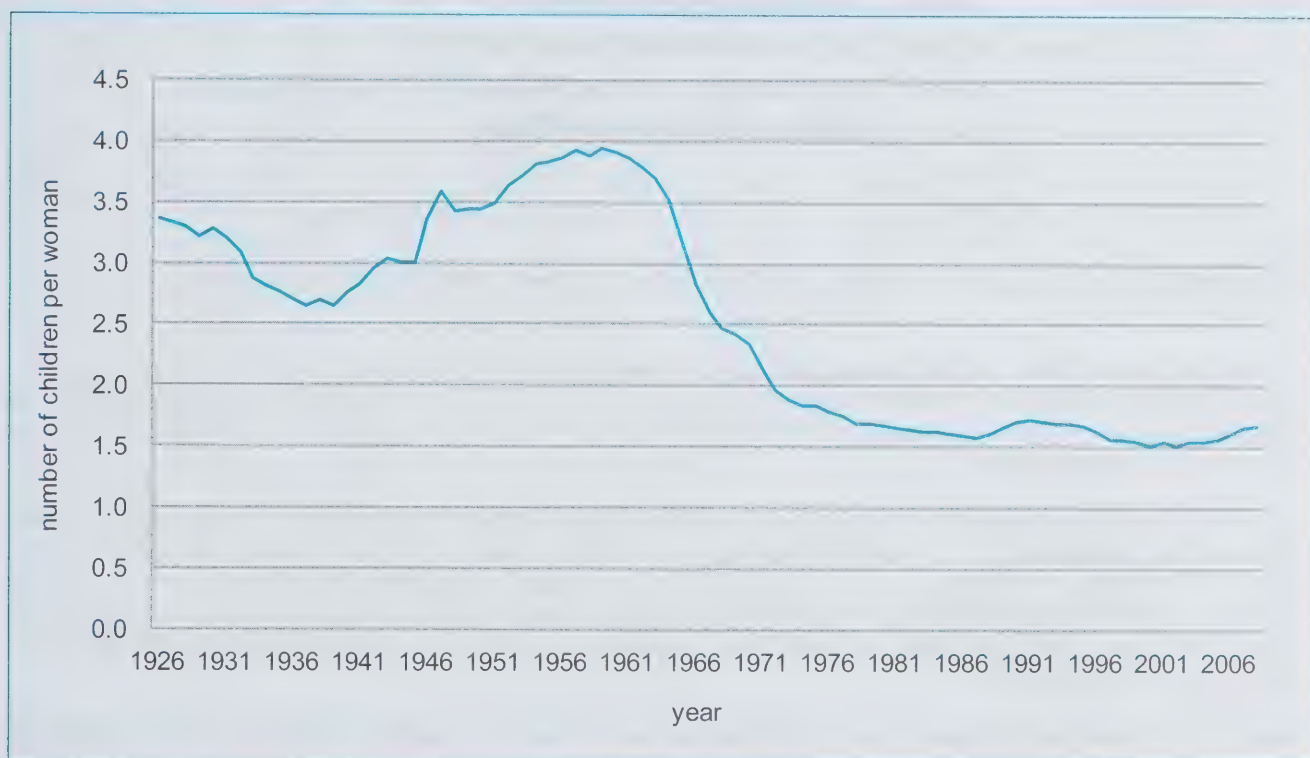
24. This paragraph refers only to lone-parent families with children aged 24 and under living at home. In 2006, there were also close to 258,000 female lone-parent families that only had children aged 25 and over. In these families, exchange and support could flow in both directions between parent and children.

Fewer children and older mothers

There were 377,900 births in Canada in 2008, a steady increase since 2003 and the highest recorded since 1995.²⁵ The total fertility rate—that is, the average number of children a woman would bear during her reproductive lifetime if she experienced the age-specific fertility rates of a given calendar year—was 1.68 in 2008. This indicator allows for annual comparisons over time as it is not affected by changes in population size or age structure.

The total fertility rate in Canada has changed during the past century. From 3.36 children per woman in 1926, it declined during the years of the Great Depression and the Second World War to fewer than three children per woman (Chart 2.4). The following period of prosperity and optimism contributed to the baby boom phenomenon, that is, the relatively high fertility rate during the years 1946 to 1965, which peaked in 1959 at almost four children per woman. Fertility rates subsequently declined, and since 1972 the total fertility rate has remained below the replacement level of 2.1—the level needed in order to replace the population in the absence of migration. In the latter part of the 2000s, fertility rates have edged up slightly.

Chart 2.4
Total fertility rate, Canada, 1926 to 2008



Note: Numbers were prorated for unknown data.

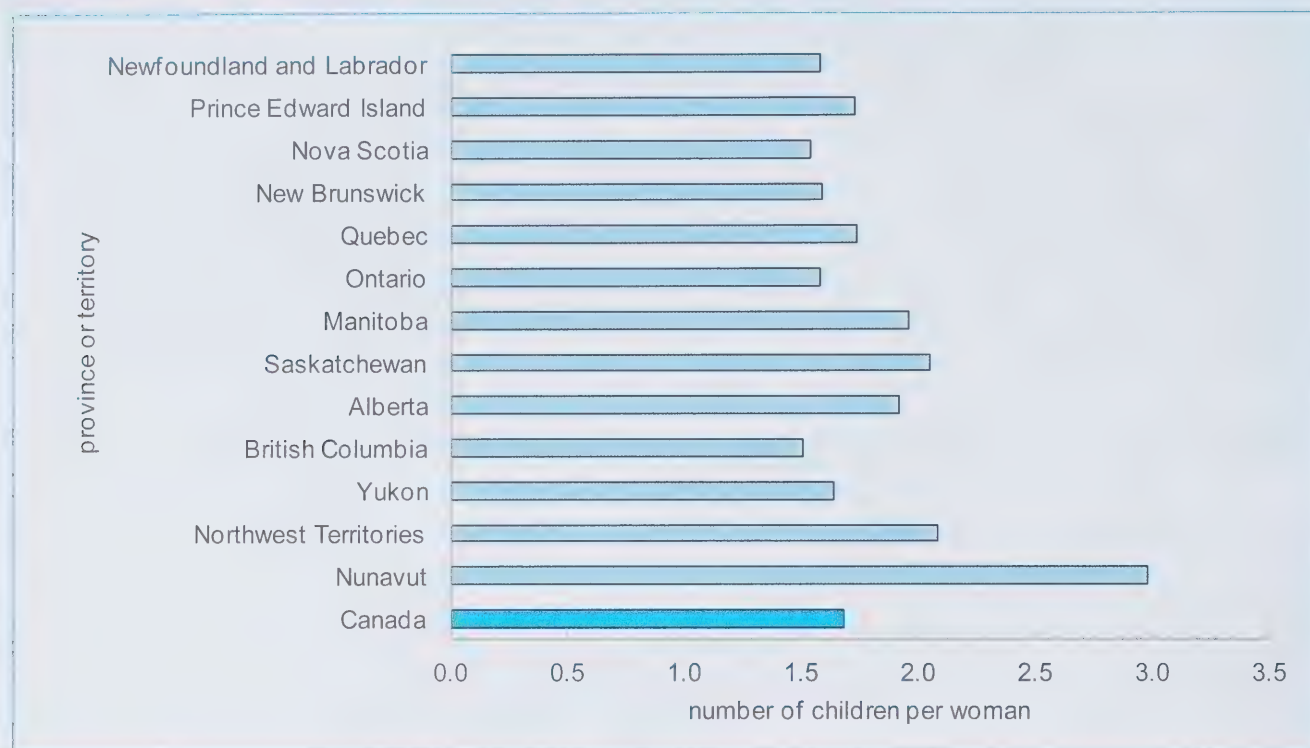
Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Birth Database and Demography Division, demographic estimates.

Across Canada in 2008, the highest total fertility rate was found in Nunavut—almost three children per woman (2.98)—owing to its large Aboriginal population that has higher overall fertility (Chart 2.5). Among the provinces, Saskatchewan was the only province with a total fertility rate of more than two children (2.05) per woman in 2008.

25. Milan, A. 2011. "Fertility: Overview, 2008". *Report on the Demographic Situation in Canada*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 91-209.

Chart 2.5

Total fertility rate, Canada, provinces and territories, 2008



Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Birth Database and Demography Division, demographic estimates.

Women are having fewer children overall and they are having them at older ages. In 2008, the average age of women at childbirth was 29.8 years; for first-time mothers, it was 28.1 years. The shift to childbearing at older ages that began more than forty years ago—the average age of first birth was 23.5 years in the mid 1960s—has continued into the late 2000s.

There is an increasing compression of childbearing as more women have their first child at older ages and then complete their childbearing in a relatively shorter period of time than in the past. Among the reasons which account for the delay in childbearing are the pursuit of higher levels of education, labour force participation, and delayed union formation. Half (50%) of all births in 2008 were to women aged 30 and over, more than double the percentage in 1981 (24%). In 2008, 4.1% of births occurred among young women aged 15 to 19, down from about 8% in the early 1980s.²⁶

Based on 2005 data for multiple births, most births that year were single births (97%), while 2.9% consisted of twins and 0.1% of triplets or more²⁷—about 10,400 multiple births altogether.²⁸ Nearly twenty-five years earlier, in 1981, 1.8% of all births were twins or other multiple births. Among women who gave birth to twins in 2005, the share of those in their late twenties had fallen to 27%, from 39% in 1981, while there were increases for 35- to 39-year-old women (from 5.2% in 1981 to 19% in 2005) and those aged 40 and over (from 0.6% in 1981 to 4.2% in 2005). The patterns for triplets or more were similar. Several factors could contribute to the increase in multiple births for women aged 30 and over, including the overall shift to childbearing at older ages as well as the use of reproductive technologies which may result in multiple births.

26. Romaniuc, A. 1984. *Fertility in Canada: From baby-boom to baby-bust*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 91-524E.

27. Multiple births comprising quadruplets or more are very rare.

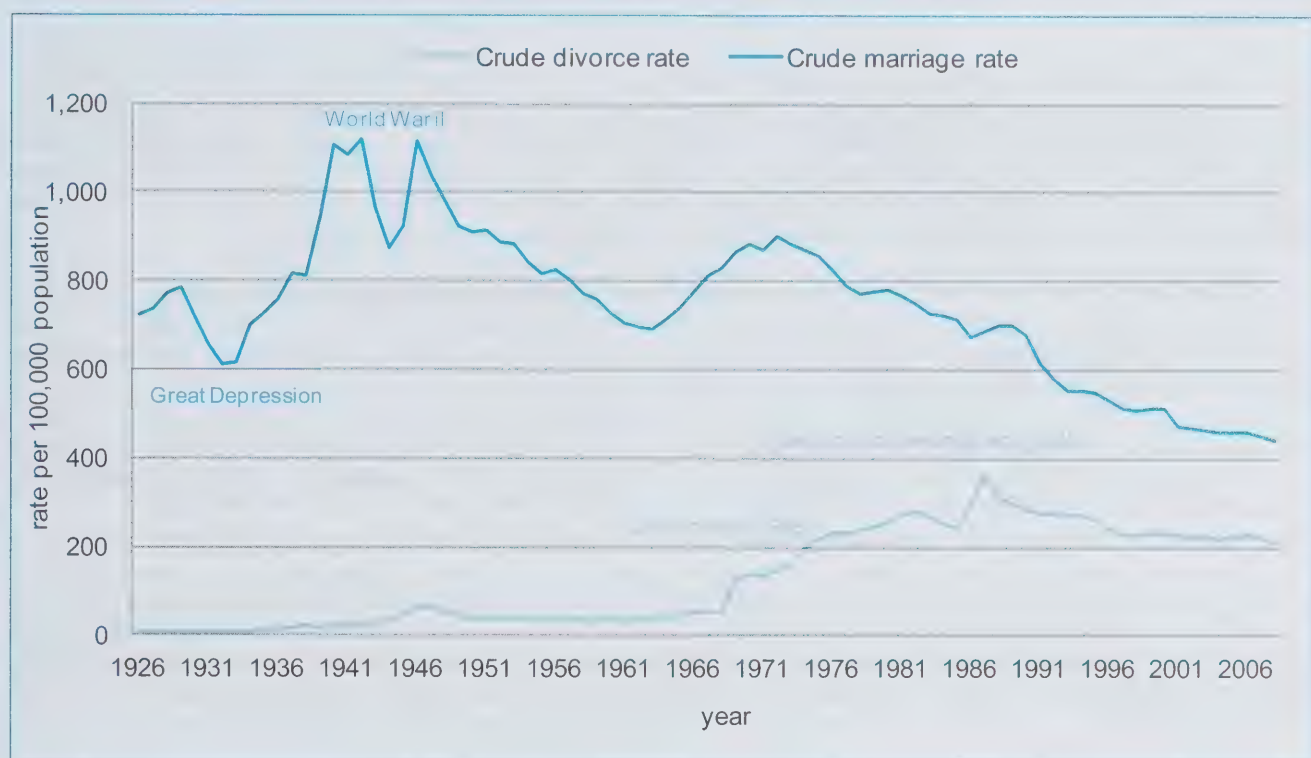
28. Milan, A. and L. Martel. 2008. "Part I: Current demographic situation in Canada, 2005 and 2006". *Report on the Demographic Situation in Canada, 2005 and 2006*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 91-209-X.

Fewer marriages²⁹

There were 147,300 marriages in Canada in 2008, according to the most recent Canadian Vital Statistics data. There has been some fluctuation over the years. For example, in 2000 there were 157,400 marriages, reflecting the popularity of marrying during the millennium year. Despite an increase in the total female population over time, the number of women in Canada getting married has been generally declining since the early 1970s. Marriage patterns over the last century can also be traced using the crude marriage rate (or total number of marriages per 100,000 population in a given year) which has been decreasing overall since the early 1970s. In 2008, it was 444 marriages per 100,000 population, about half the rate recorded close to four decades earlier—902 marriages per 100,000 population in 1972 (Chart 2.6).

Chart 2.6

Crude marriage rate and crude divorce rate, Canada, 1926 to 2008



Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Marriage Database and Divorce Database and Demography Division, demographic estimates.

Throughout the last century crude marriage rates have fluctuated in tandem with historical events. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the crude rate fell as people may have been less willing or able to marry during a period of high unemployment and challenging economic circumstances. Canada entered the Second World War in 1939 and concerns regarding possible conscription—which would have impacted single men more than married men—may have influenced some couples to marry. The crude marriage rate dropped during the war years to 876 per 100,000 in 1944 then peaked again in 1946 as couples were reunited after the war.

On average, the age at which people get married for the first time is increasing. In 2008, the average age of women at first marriage was 29.6 years, about two years younger than that of men (31.6 years). This was higher than throughout the 1960s and 1970s when people married at younger ages—in 1972, for example, at an average age of 23.0 years for women and 25.4 years for men. While the age at marriage has increased during the past four decades, the two-year age differential between women and men has remained fairly stable.

29. Marriage data in this section are from Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Marriage Database.

Relatively high rates of divorce have increased the size of the population potentially able to remarry. Following a divorce, two people are eligible to remarry while this is the case for only one person following widowhood. As well, because divorce tends to occur at younger ages than widowhood, divorced individuals may be more willing, or have more opportunity, to enter a new union. For divorced women who remarried in 2008, the average age at remarriage was 44.5 years while for those who had been widowed, it was 57.6 years. For men, the average ages were 48.1 years and 63.9 years, respectively.

Stable number of divorces³⁰

In 2008, there were about 70,200 divorces in Canada, representing a crude divorce rate of 211 divorces per 100,000 population. Nearly one-fifth (19%) of divorces that were finalized in 2008 were for marriages that lasted four years or less. An additional 23% of divorces were for marriages that lasted between five and nine years. The 30 year divorce rate per 1,000 marriages was 407 in 2008, meaning that 40.7% of marriages are expected to end in divorce before the 30th year of marriage (if the duration-specific divorce rates calculated for 2008 remain stable).

Prior to 1968, divorce was relatively rare and crude rates remained low according to the data observed throughout the early to mid 1900s. Over the last century, peaks in the crude divorce rate followed the 1968 and 1985 divorce legislation, with a record high in 1987 of 364 divorces per 100,000 population. Since approximately the late 1990s, the number of divorces and the crude divorce rate have been relatively stable perhaps as more people are living common-law, are reluctant to legally marry, or both. In addition, some marriage breakdowns might not be formalized by a legal divorce unless one spouse wants to enter a new marriage.

Not only are women and men getting married at older ages, they are also getting divorced at older ages. The age at which couple's divorce has been slowly increasing in recent decades. In 2008, the median age at divorce for women was 41.0 years, up from 35.7 years in 1991.³¹ For men, the median age at divorce increased from 38.3 to 44.0 years during the same period.

Some couples who divorce do not have dependents, some couples with dependents agree on custody arrangements independently of court proceedings, and other couples obtain custody of children through court proceedings. Based on 2004 data, of the 31,800 custody decisions that year, custody was jointly granted to the husband and wife in almost half of all proceedings (47%), continuing the upward trend of the last two decades.³²

Cases where custody of dependents is awarded to the wife only have been decreasing from 76% in 1988³³ to 45% in 2004. Custody cases granted to the husband only represented 8.1% in 2004, compared with a high of 15% in 1986.³⁴ One possible explanation for the more rapid gain of male lone-parent families is the growing share of joint custody arrangements following a union dissolution and fewer mothers being granted sole custody following a divorce.

Since divorces are only for legal marriages, the dissolutions of common-law unions are not considered in these statistics. According to the 2006 General Social Survey, from 2001 to 2006, there were about the same number of people who terminated a marriage either through separation or divorce, as there were who ended a common-law relationship.³⁵ Given the higher number of legal marriages than common-law unions (6.1 million and 1.4 million, respectively, according to the 2006 Census), this reflects the greater tendency of the latter to dissolve compared with marriages.

30. Unless otherwise specified, divorce data in this section are from Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Divorce Database.

31. Data indicating unknown age and sex are excluded from the calculation of median age at divorce.

32. Statistics Canada. CANSIM Table 101-6512 Number of dependents in divorces involving custody orders, by party to whom custody was granted, Canada, provinces and territories, annual. In data from the Central Registry of Divorce Proceedings, joint custody does not necessarily refer to where children live—they may be in sole physical custody with joint legal (decision-making) arrangements or in shared physical custody with joint legal arrangements as well. Under a joint custody arrangement, dependents do not necessarily spend equal amounts of their time with each parent; however decision-making responsibilities are shared between parents.

33. Statistics Canada. 2004. "Divorces 2001 and 2002". The Daily. May 4th.

34. The remaining 0.4% of custody orders was either awarded to an agency, a person other than the husband or wife or it was not stated.

35. Beaupré, P. and E. Cloutier. 2007. *Navigating Family Transitions: Evidence from the General Social Survey- 2006*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no 89-625-X.

Intact families most common

According to the 2006 General Social Survey, the majority of couples with children (88%) were intact families, that is, all of the biological or adopted children were common to both members of the couple. There were more than 500,000 stepfamilies—these comprise one or more children of only one member of the couple and whose birth or adoption preceded the current relationship. Stepfamilies accounted for 12% of couples with children, or 5.3% of all families in Canada.³⁶

About 6.3% of all couples with children were simple stepfamilies—that is, all children were of one spouse or partner only and preceded the current relationship. The children in simple stepfamilies were more likely to be of mothers (5.0% of all couples with children) than of fathers (1.2% of all couples with children).³⁷ An additional 5.3% of couples with children were complex stepfamilies—these include children of each spouse or partner and whose birth or adoption preceded the current relationship, or comprise one or more children from the current union together with one or more children who preceded it.

Many older women live alone

Over four million women and men did not live with family members in 2006, but either lived alone or with non-relatives only—that is, as roommates, lodgers or boarders. This represented over 17% of all women in Canada (and 16% of men). These types of living arrangements were fairly common among women and men in their late twenties, when 17% of women and 24% of men did not live with family or relatives. This likely reflects a stage in the life course of individuals when they are not living in couples and may be pursuing their education and establishing their financial independence. Young adults who share accommodations may do so either as a cost saving measure, for companionship, or both.

For women, the percentage living outside of a family context decreased (less than 10%) during the prime years of family formation—the late thirties and early forties—then it increased again after age 50, when more women were living alone. For men, the percentage living outside of a family context was about 16%, from their early forties to early sixties. Most women who were not living with family members lived alone (14% of all women), a share which increased with age.

In 2006, among people aged 20 to 54, a lower percentage of women than men lived alone. This gender difference reflects the tendency of women to be slightly younger than their spouses or partners when they form unions. By their mid-to-late fifties, more women than men lived alone, with the gap increasing throughout the senior years. By age 65 to 69, one-quarter (25%) of women lived alone, as did 14% of men. The percentage of people who lived alone was highest at 80 years and over for both women (54%) and men (24%). This sex differential in later life can be largely explained by the higher life expectancy of women compared with men, and as a consequence, the higher percentage of women who were widowed.³⁸

Most women and men lived in private households in 2006 (98%) while about 2% lived in collective dwellings, most of which were health care and related facilities such as nursing homes (2.2% of women and 1.7% of men).³⁹ Specifically, about 296,500 women and 219,100 men lived in some form of collective dwelling. Owing to their greater longevity, a higher percentage of women than men spent at least some of their senior years in collective dwellings (9.3% compared with 5.1%) in 2006.

36. Béchard, M. 2007. *Family Structure by Region, 2006 (Revised)*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 89-625-XIE.

37. Does not sum to 6.3% due to rounding.

38. Milan, A., M. Vézina and C. Wells. 2007. *Family portrait: Continuity and change in Canadian families and households in 2006: 2006 Census*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 97-553-X.

39. Across all age groups, 304,900 females lived in some form of collective dwellings, including about 8,400 girls aged 14 and under.

Living arrangements vary by ethnocultural group⁴⁰

According to the 2006 Census, over two million visible minority women aged 15 and over lived in private households (Table 2.4). About 9 in 10 (90%) visible minority women lived in a family context either as a child, as part of a couple, as a lone parent or with other relatives, while few lived alone (6.4%) or with non-relatives only (3.7%). A slightly lower percentage of visible minority women lived as part of a couple (54%) than did non-visible minority women (58%). However, more visible minority women were married than non-visible minority women (51% compared with 46%) and fewer lived common-law (3.6% compared with 12%).

Table 2.4

Women and men aged 15 years and over, by living arrangement and visible minority status, Canada, 2006

Living arrangement	Women				Men			
	Visible minority		Not a visible minority		Visible minority		Not a visible minority	
	thousands	%	thousands	%	thousands	%	thousands	%
All living arrangements	2,037.1	100.0	11,079.6	100.0	1,871.3	100.0	10,523.9	100.0
In a couple	1,103.6	54.2	6,375.0	57.5	1,077.5	57.6	6,409.4	60.9
With married spouse	1,030.3	50.6	5,075.1	45.8	1,003.5	53.6	5,102.9	48.5
With common-law partner	73.4	3.6	1,299.9	11.7	74.0	4.0	1,306.4	12.4
Lone parents	208.7	10.2	923.6	8.3	37.7	2.0	244.1	2.3
As children	403.0	19.8	1,468.4	13.3	473.6	25.3	1,874.2	17.8
With relatives ¹	115.1	5.6	245.5	2.2	64.3	3.4	181.0	1.7
With non-relatives only	75.4	3.7	353.1	3.2	86.5	4.6	465.0	4.4
Alone	131.3	6.4	1,714.0	15.5	131.6	7.0	1,350.1	12.8

1. These households may also contain non-relatives. See *2006 Census Dictionary* for more information on census family concepts.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population.

Among the visible minority women in couples, there were some differences for specific groups—15% of Black and 14% of Latin American women lived with a common-law partner, as did 12% Japanese women. This was the case for 3% or less of Arab and West Asian, as well as South Asian women.

About 10% of visible minority women were lone parents as were 8.3% of non-visible minority women, but the shares were higher for women who were Black (24%), Latin American (14%) and Southeast Asian (12%).

Another aspect of the diversity of families in Canada today is the growing percentage of couples which are mixed unions—that is, one member of a couple belongs to a visible minority group and the other does not, or both spouses or partners belong to different visible minority groups. According to the 2006 Census, 3.9% of the 7.5 million couples in Canada were in mixed unions.⁴¹ Between 2001 and 2006, mixed unions grew at more than five times the pace of all couples (33% and 6.0%, respectively). The growth of mixed unions may be the result of people having more opportunities to meet and develop relationships with those from different backgrounds in various social, educational or work-related settings. As well, a greater number of people in Canada identify themselves as belonging to visible minority groups.

40. Data in this section are from the Census of Population.

41. Milan, A., H. Maheux and T. Chui. 2010. "A portrait of couples in mixed unions". *Canadian Social Trends*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-008-X.

Overall, women and men who belonged to visible minority groups and were in couples had similar shares in mixed unions. However, within various minority groups, there were some differences. For example, Filipino, Korean, Southeast Asian, Japanese, Chinese and Latin American women in couples accounted for a higher percentage of spouses or partners in mixed unions than did men from these visible minority groups. There were more than three times as many married or partnered Filipino women in mixed unions (28%) as there were Filipino men (9%).

For the Japanese population, nearly two-thirds (65%) of Japanese women in couples were in mixed unions, while this was the case for over one-half (52%) of Japanese men. Arab and West Asian, as well as Black and South Asian women who were in couples had lower percentages of mixed unions compared with men from these groups. In 2006, about half as many Arab or West Asian married or partnered women were paired outside their visible minority group (9%) as were men (19%). Similarly, two in ten Black women in couples were in mixed unions, as were three in ten Black men.

Living arrangements also varied by immigrant status. According to the 2006 Census, more than three million immigrant women aged 15 and over in Canada lived in private households.⁴² Most immigrant women lived with family members (86%) either as part of a couple, as a lone parent, as a child, or with other relatives (Table 2.5). Some immigrant women lived alone (11%) and few lived only with non-relatives (2.2%). A higher percentage of recent immigrant women—those who had been living in Canada for less than five years—lived in a family context (92%) compared with non-immigrant women (82%). The patterns were similar among immigrant men.

Table 2.5

Women and men aged 15 years and over, by immigration status and living arrangement, Canada, 2006

Living arrangement	Women			Men		
	Recent immigrants ¹	All immigrants	Non-immigrant percentage	Recent immigrants ¹	All immigrants	Non-immigrant
All living arrangements	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
In a couple	66.4	62.2	55.6	64.6	70.2	57.7
With married spouse	62.8	58.4	43.0	61.0	65.6	44.6
With common-law partner	3.6	3.8	12.5	3.6	4.6	13.1
Lone parents	6.6	9.6	8.4	1.3	2.2	2.3
As children	13.6	9.9	15.7	17.6	13.1	20.8
With relatives ²	5.3	4.7	2.1	3.9	2.5	1.8
With non-relatives only	3.9	2.2	3.4	5.9	3.0	4.7
Alone	4.3	11.4	14.9	6.7	9.0	12.8

1. Recent immigrants are immigrants who arrived in Canada from 2001 to 2006. They are a subgroup of the immigrant category.

2. These households may also contain non-relatives. See *2006 Census Dictionary* for more information on census family concepts.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population.

A higher percentage of recent immigrant women (66%) lived as part of a couple in 2006 compared with all immigrant women (62%) or non-immigrant women (56%). However, the share of recent immigrant women living in a common-law relationship was lower (3.6%) than that of non-immigrant women (13%). In 2006, living with relatives was higher for immigrant women (4.7%)—particularly for recent immigrant women (5.3%)—than for non-immigrant women (2.1%), perhaps due to factors such as economic necessity, immigration sponsorship requirements or cultural preferences.

42. In this section, the census data which refer to the immigrant population include some individuals who have resided in Canada for many years and others who have arrived recently. These data include a small number of immigrants born in Canada and exclude non-permanent residents.

Unpaid work inside and outside the home

Whatever their family and living arrangements, many women and men work without pay in the home and in the community. This section uses data from the General Social Survey of 2010 to examine the weekly average hours spent on unpaid work, as estimated by respondents aged 15 and over.^{43 44} Differences between women and men will be examined for specific unpaid activities: first, the amount of unpaid care provided to children aged 14 and under who were reported by respondents as being part of their household; next, the time spent on domestic work such as cleaning and household maintenance; and finally, the care provided to seniors (65 and over) as well as volunteer work for organizations.

Women spend more time on care of children in the household than men

One major type of activity performed in the home is the care of children.⁴⁵ When respondents were asked to report the number of hours spent on unpaid child care in the household,⁴⁶ women generally reported a higher number of hours per week than men. In 2010, women spent an average of 50.1 hours per week on child care, more than double the average time (24.4 hours) spent by men (Table 2.6).

Table 2.6

Time spent on unpaid care of a child in the household, by working arrangement and age of youngest child, Canada, 2010

Working arrangement and age of youngest child	Women average number of hours per week	Men
All women and men	50.1	24.4 *
Working arrangement		
Respondent was working		
Dual earner couples; respondent working full-time	49.8	27.2 *
Dual earner couples; respondent working part-time	59.4	40.5 *
Single earner couples; respondent working	50.8	25.5 *
Lone parents; respondent working	26.9	12.0 *
Respondent was not working		
Single earner couples; respondent not working	81.3	36.9 *
Couples; neither partner working	59.5	36.3 E*
Lone parents; respondent not working	30.0	8.1 E*
Age of youngest child in the household		
0 to 4	67.5	30.2 *
5 to 14	37.7	19.7 *

* statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey 2010.

43. Further information on time use and the time spent on unpaid work can be found in: Statistics Canada. 2011.

General Social Survey – 2010: Overview of the Time Use of Canadians. Catalogue no. 89-647-X.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-647-x/89-647-x2011001-eng.htm> (accessed July 27, 2011).

44. Further information on generational differences in paid and unpaid work can be found in: Katherine Marshall. 2011.

"Generational change in paid and unpaid work". Canadian Social Trends no. 92. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-008-X.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2011002/article/11520-eng.htm> (accessed July 27, 2011). This article contains information on trends across time that readers may also find of interest.

45. In this section, all references to care of a child or to child care refer to unpaid care of children who reside in the respondent's household.

46. Only respondents who had a household member aged 14 or less were asked about the amount of time they spent caring for a child in the household.

However, not all women spent the same amount of time on unpaid child care. Two important factors impacted the amount of time spent on unpaid child care: the household's paid working arrangements and the age of the youngest child.

Among women currently doing paid work, those who were lone parents spent the least amount of time caring for children—26.9 hours per week. Women who were the sole wage earner in a couple spent more time on child care—50.8 hours per week. A similar amount of time (49.8 hours per week) was spent on child care by women who were part of a dual-earner couple and worked full-time. If they worked part-time, women who were part of a dual-earner couple spent an average of 59.4 hours per week on unpaid child care.

Among women who were not doing paid work at the time of the survey, there were considerable differences according to the type of living arrangements. Lone parent women who were not working spent the least amount of time on household child care—30.0 hours per week. In comparison, women who were part of a couple in which neither partner was working at the time of the survey spent double that amount of time (59.5 hours per week). This may be explained in part by the older ages of children in the households of non-working lone parents, as older children tend to require less child care. The average age of the youngest child in lone parent non-working households was 7.9 years. In comparison, the average age of the youngest child in couple households where neither partner was working was 5.4 years.

Women who were part of a couple where the other partner was the sole wage earner spent the most time caring for household children—an average of 81.3 hours per week.

Indeed regardless of parental working arrangements, the age of the youngest child in the household was associated with the amount of time spent on child care. When the youngest child in the household was under age 5, women recorded, on average, 67.5 hours per week of child care and men reported about half that (30.2 hours). When the youngest child in the household was older, average weekly hours spent on child care declined for both sexes, although a gap remained between women and men. Women spent 37.7 hours on unpaid child care for children aged 5 to 14, compared with 19.7 hours for men.

Women do more domestic work than men

Besides care of children, unpaid work also includes everyday domestic chores such as housework, yard work and home maintenance. A gap between women and men was evident in the time spent on domestic work. While men reported spending, on average, 8.3 hours on unpaid domestic work, women spent more than one and a half times this amount—13.8 hours (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7
Time spent on household domestic work, by working arrangement, Canada, 2010

Working arrangement	Women average number of hours per week	Men
All women and men	13.8	8.3 *
Respondent was working		
Dual earner couples; respondent working full-time	13.9	8.6 *
Dual earner couples; respondent working part-time	21.0	11.8 *
Single earner couples; respondent working	15.2	8.8 *
Singles; respondent working	7.7	6.1 *
Respondent was not working		
Single earner couples; respondent not working	23.4	14.6 *
Couples; neither partner working	17.3	10.6 *
Singles; respondent not working	10.0	6.3 *

* statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2010.

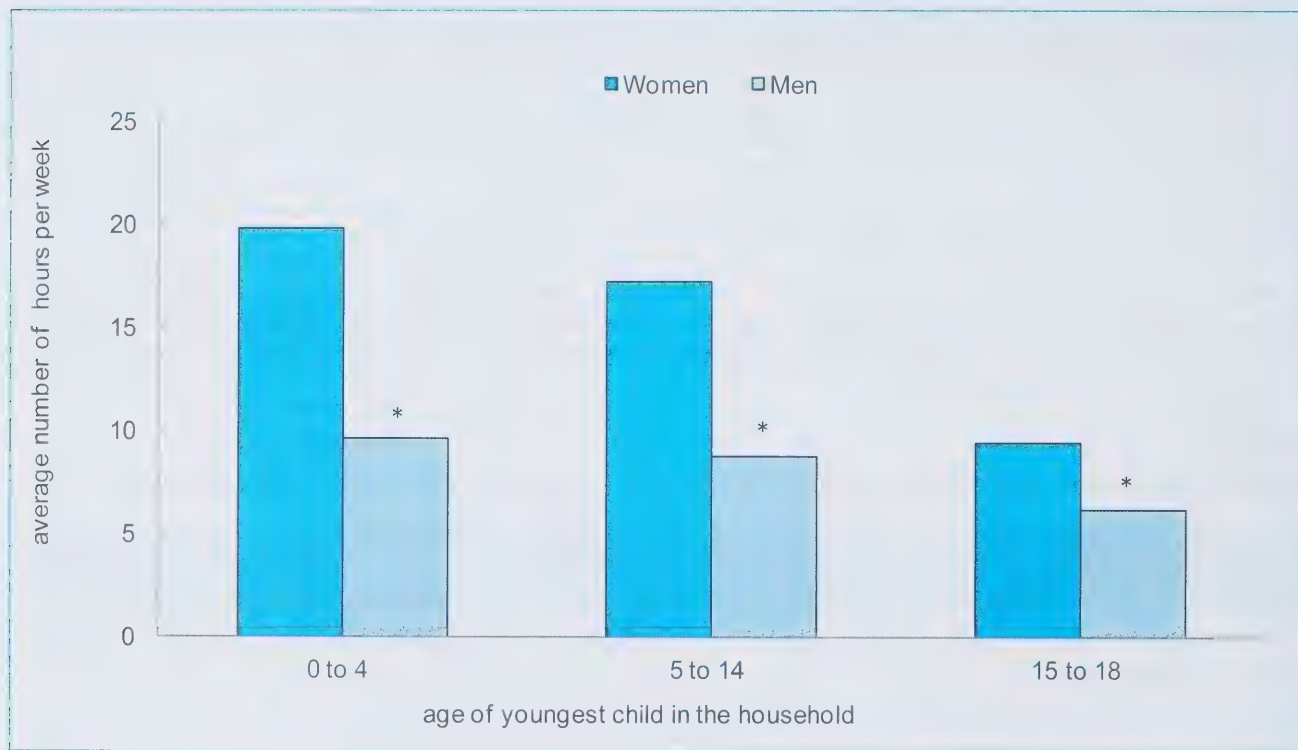
Time spent on domestic work varied among women according to their working arrangements. Among women who were working at the time of the survey, those who were part of a dual-earner couple and worked part-time spent the most time on domestic work—an average of 21.0 hours per week. Less time was spent on domestic work by full-time working women who were part of a dual-earner couple (13.9 hours per week), or women who were the sole wage earner in a single-earner couple (15.2 hours per week). The least amount of time was spent by single working women. On average, they spent 7.7 hours per week on domestic work.

Among women who were not working at the time of the survey, those whose spouse or partner was the couple's sole wage earner spent the most time on domestic work—an average of 23.4 hours per week. Women in couples where neither spouse nor partner was working spent an average of 17.3 hours per week on domestic work, while non-working single women spent the least amount of time—an average of 10.0 hours per week.

When looking at families with children aged 18 and under in the household, it is apparent that the age of the youngest child impacts the amount of domestic work done in the household. As the age of the youngest child increased, the average hours of domestic work per week declined for both women and men. However, there was a consistent gender gap regarding hours spent on domestic work, with women spending more time. This gap narrowed noticeably when the youngest child in the household was between 15 and 18 years old (Chart 2.7).

Chart 2.7

Average number of hours per week of domestic work, by age of youngest child in the household, Canada, 2010



* statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2010.

Division of housework evolving between the sexes

During the past quarter century, the involvement of men and women in paid work and housework has changed. A study¹ comparing three generations of young people—the late baby boomers (born 1957 to 1966), Generation X (1969 to 1978) and Generation Y (1981 to 1990) found an increasing similarity in the involvement in paid work and housework between men and women from the late baby boomers to those in Generation Y.

Despite the narrowing of the differences, men continue to have an overall greater involvement in paid work than women, and a lesser involvement in housework.

For example, at ages 20 to 29, late baby boom men did on average 1.4 hours more paid work per day than women. In Generation Y, this difference had narrowed to 1.1 hours.

Late baby boom women, when they were aged 20 to 29, did 1.2 hours more housework per day than men. By the time Generation Y arrived at the same age group, the difference had narrowed to 0.4 hours. This was due entirely to a decrease in the time women spent on housework.

When looking only at dual-earner couples, the dominant family form since the 1980s, the study found that young adults are increasingly sharing economic and domestic responsibilities. As women have increased their hours of paid work, men have steadily increased their share of household work.

Women aged 20 to 29 in dual-earner couples in Generation Y did an average of 6.7 hours of paid work per day in 2010, up from 6.4 hours for their counterparts in Generation X.

On the other hand, dual-earner women in Generation Y did 53% of the total housework done by couples, down from 59% for their counterparts in Generation X.

Average daily time spent on paid work and housework by men and women in young dual-earner couples is more similar for those without children and particularly so for Generation Y.

However, for both Generation X and Y, with the presence of dependent children at home, the contribution of women to a couple's total paid work time declined while their contribution to housework increased.

About this study: Using a time diary method, this study asked respondents to report the average minutes on any given day spent on particular activities involved in housework.

Note:

1. Katherine Marshall. 2011. "Generational change in paid and unpaid work". *Canadian Social Trends* no. 92. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-008-X. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2011002/article/11520-eng.htm> (accessed July 27, 2011).

Women spent more time caring for seniors

Beyond the realm of domestic work and caring for children, unpaid work may involve caring for seniors. In 2010, the General Social Survey showed that fewer than 3 percent of Canadians were providing care to a senior living in their household. Women and men did not differ in this regard. Care of seniors outside the household, however, was more common, provided by 14% of women and 9% of men (Table 2.8).

Women tended to spend more time caring for seniors than men. Forty-nine percent (49%) of women providing some care to a senior spent more than 10 hours per week on this activity compared with 25% of men. Of the women who provided care to a senior living outside the household, 11% spent more than 10 hours per week providing care compared with 7% of men.

Table 2.8

Women and men caring for a senior, by the senior's place of residence, Canada, 2010

Care of senior and place of residence	Women percentage	Men
Provide care to a senior¹		
Senior living in the household	2.8	2.4
Senior not living in the household	14.3	9.2 *
Spend more than 10 hours per week caring for a senior²		
Senior living in the household	48.9	25.0 *
Senior not living in the household	11.4	6.5 ^{E*}

* statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

1. Respondents were classified as providing care to a senior if they did it for at least one hour per week.

2. Only those who provide care to a senior are included.

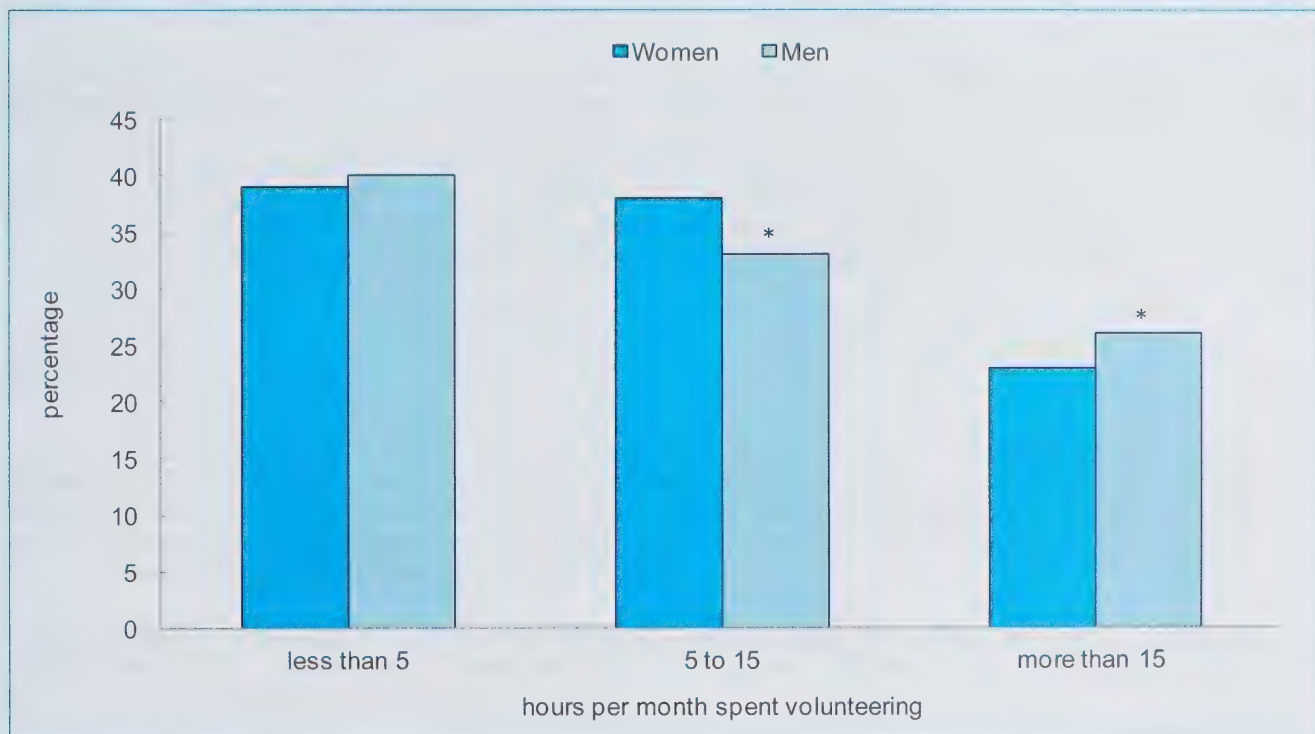
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2010.

Slightly more women volunteered than men

Volunteering for an organization can be another aspect of unpaid work. Compared with domestic household work and the unpaid care of children, time spent volunteering is more evenly divided between women and men. A slightly higher percentage of women than men reported doing unpaid volunteer work for an organization in the last year (40% compared with 36%). Among those who reported volunteering, there were small differences between women and men regarding the amount of time spent on this activity. Almost four in ten women who volunteered (38%) reported doing so for 5 to 15 hours per month, compared with one-third of men (33%). In comparison, slightly fewer women (23%) than men (26%) reported volunteering more than 15 hours per month (Chart 2.8).

Chart 2.8

Distribution of volunteers according to the time they spent volunteering, Canada, 2010



* statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

Note: Only respondents who indicated that they volunteered are included.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2010.

Chapter 3

Women and Health

by Martin Turcotte

The factors associated with good physical and mental health are fairly similar among women and men: healthy lifestyles, income, education level, age, as well as social inclusion and participation. Nevertheless, because of various biological and social characteristics specific to women, the health problems they face in their lives may differ from those faced by men. For example, because their life expectancy is higher, women are more likely than men to develop chronic health problems that often appear with age, such as arthritis. This chapter looks at many of these differences between women and men.

More specifically, it examines five major dimensions of health. The first four sections of the chapter are based on data reported by the respondents of the 2009 Canadian Community Health Survey⁴⁷. In the first section, we look at measures of well-being and good physical and mental health, including some measures of fitness. The second section examines chronic health conditions and problems related to mental health. In the third section, we examine data on risk factors and some health-related behaviours (diet, physical activity and tobacco use). The fourth section deals with accessing and using health services. Finally, the fifth section presents statistics on life expectancy, deaths and causes of death; these statistics are obtained from administrative data.

Well-being and measures of health

Self-perceived health

Perceived health is an indicator of overall health status. Among other things, it can reflect aspects of health not captured in other measures, such as incipient disease, disease severity, physiological and psychological reserves, and social and mental function. Studies have shown that compared with men, women consider more factors when assessing their overall health. For example, they are more likely to consider psychological factors and the presence of non-life-threatening illnesses.⁴⁸

In 2009, 60% of females aged 12 and over reported very good or excellent health, a proportion no different from that of males (Table 3.1). However, six years earlier in 2003, women had been less likely than men to report very good or excellent health (57% versus 60%).

Women aged 25 to 34 are the most likely to positively self-evaluate their health; this likelihood diminishes with age. For example, in 2009, 71% of women aged 25 to 34 said they were in very good or excellent health, compared with 30% of women aged 75 or over.

47. The target population of the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) is the total population of Canada aged 12 years and over living in private households. Persons living in a collective dwelling such as a senior residence or health care establishment are excluded from this survey. Certain results should therefore be interpreted with care, especially those about the health of persons aged 85 and over, as they are more likely to be living in institutions.

48. Y. Benyamini, E., A. Leventhal and H. Leventhal. 2000. "Gender differences in processing information for making self-assessments of health." *Psychosomatic Medicine*. Vol. 62, no. 3, pp. 354-364. See also: Shields, Margot and Sanin Shooshtari. 2001. "Determinants of self-perceived health." *Health Reports*. Vol. 13, no. 1, December. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003, pp. 35-52.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2001001/article/6023-eng.pdf>

Table 3.1
Self-perceived health, by age group, Canada, 2003 and 2009

Age group	Very good or excellent health			
	2003		2009	
	Females	Males	Females	Males
	percentage			
Total—12 and over	57.3	59.5	60.3	60.7
12 to 24	65.6	68.4	67.0	69.6
25 to 34	69.4	69.8	70.7	72.3
35 to 44	63.3	64.0	66.2	65.2
45 to 54	56.8	56.2	62.3	56.6
55 to 64	48.1	50.2	54.2	53.1
65 to 74	39.3	41.2	43.9	46.2
75 and over	30.8	33.8	35.0	36.0

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2003 and 2009.

Women aged 45 to 64 were more likely to describe their health as very good or excellent than six years earlier. In 2003, the proportion of women aged 45 to 64 who reported very good or excellent health was 53%, whereas 59% did so in 2009 (results not shown).

Socio-economic status is strongly linked to health. The women most likely to report very good or excellent health were those with a higher income and education level. For example, among women aged 45 to 64 who had not completed secondary school, 39% described their health as very good or excellent (Table 3.2). By comparison, this proportion was 73% among those who had obtained a university degree. Since growing numbers of women are completing university, it is possible that the proportion of women reporting excellent health will continue to rise in the coming years (for more information on education level, see the chapter on women and education).

Table 3.2
Persons reporting very good or excellent health, by household income and education level, Canada, 2009

Household income and education level	Females			Males		
	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
	percentage					
Household income						
Lowest quintile	57.7	37.8	30.5	55.9	33.0	30.3
Second quintile	63.1	50.9	42.4	62.2	49.4	38.8
Third quintile	71.5	60.6	48.2	73.1	52.9	46.4
Fourth quintile	75.6	68.5	54.7	69.2	64.0	53.4
Highest quintile	79.1	72.5	59.8	77.2	63.0	60.7
Education level						
Less than secondary school	48.1	38.7	30.6	53.2	41.1	35.1
Secondary school diploma	62.5	56.9	43.3	68.0	52.7	42.0
College diploma or trade certificate	67.7	59.6	46.1	68.4	57.1	41.7
University degree	75.9	73.1	55.6	73.5	63.9	55.5

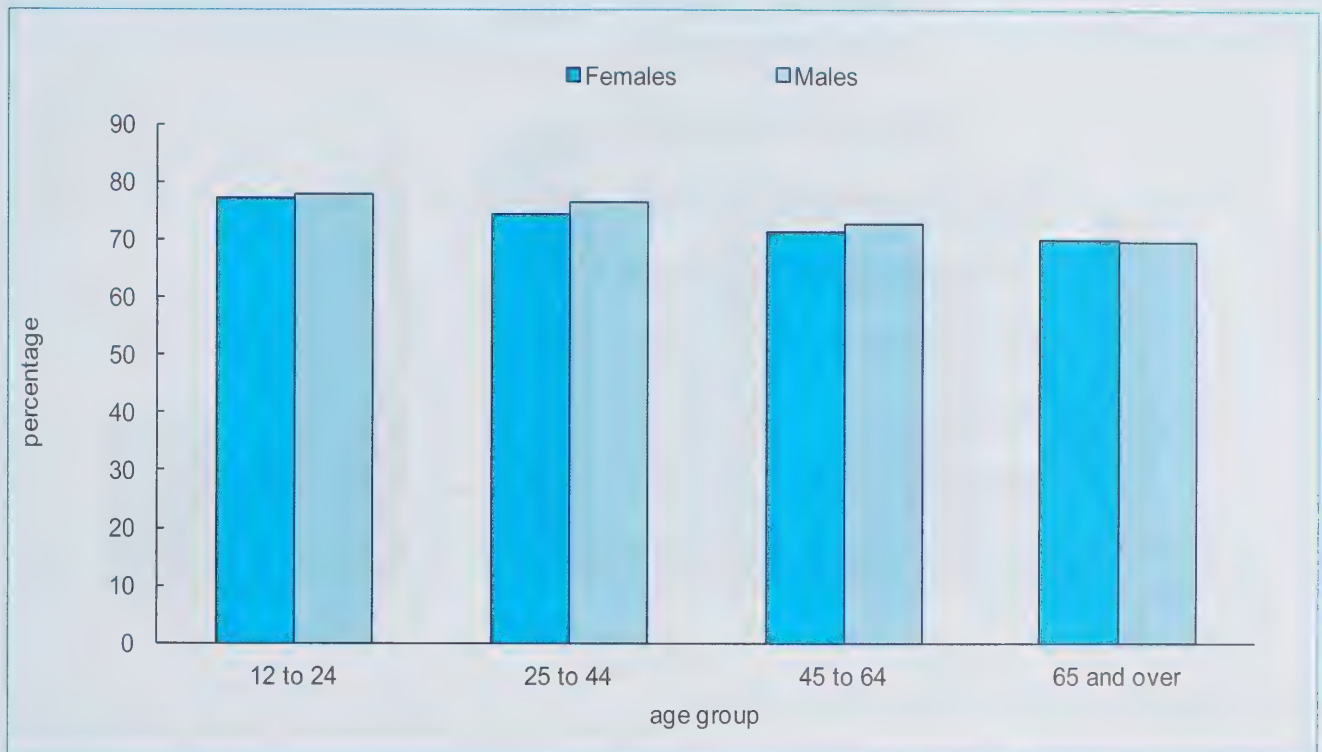
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Self-rating mental health and stress

In 2009, 73% of females aged 12 and over reported that their mental health was very good or excellent, compared with 75% of males (results not shown). In all age groups, the percentages of females and males reporting very good or excellent mental health were similar. However, the percentages of females aged 65 and over reporting very good or excellent mental health (70%) was smaller than for females aged 12 to 24 (77%) (Chart 3.1).

Chart 3.1

Persons who assessed their mental health as very good or excellent, by age group, Canada, 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Just as in the case of overall health, an income gradient was evident for mental health. Among women aged 45 to 64 belonging to the lowest income quintile (that is, the 20% of women with the lowest incomes), only 55% described their mental health as very good or excellent. By comparison, the proportion was 81% for those in the highest income quintile (results not shown).

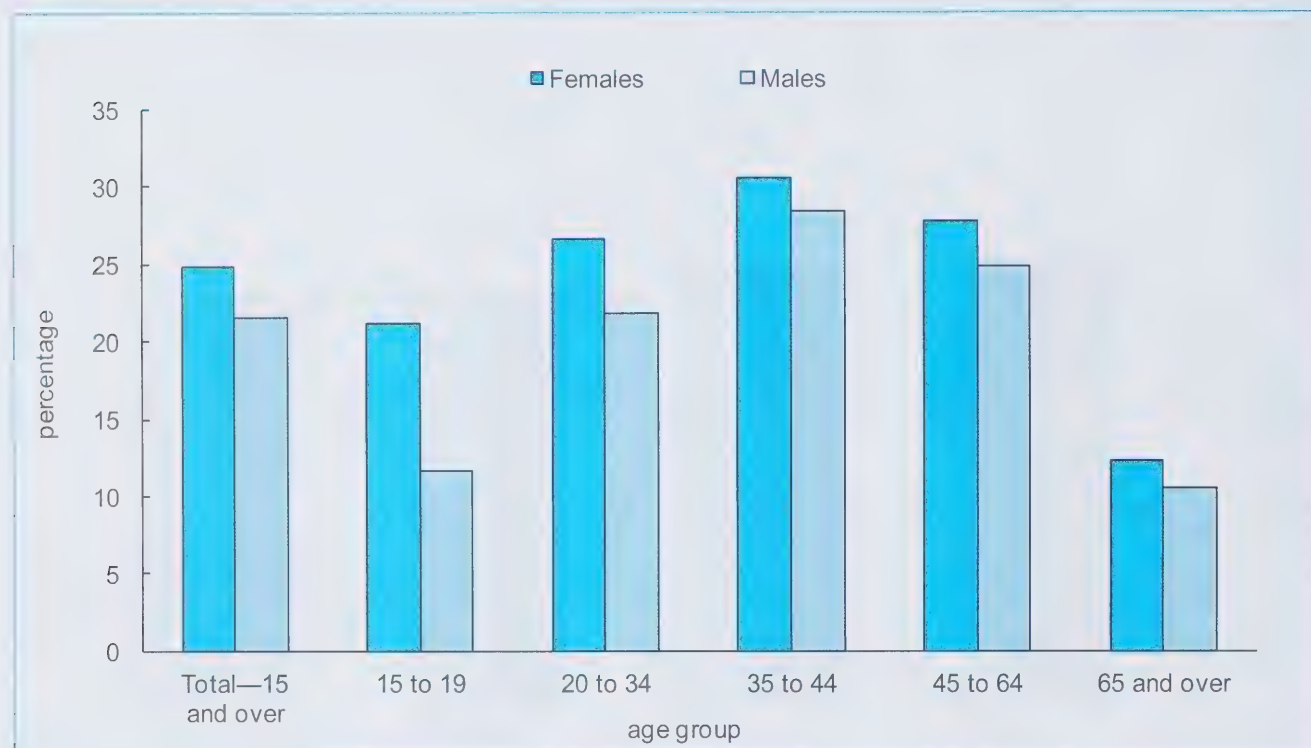
For those who consider their mental health to be poor or fair, going to a psychologist, doctor or other person may be an option. It appears that women are more likely than men to do this. For example, in 2009, among females aged 12 and over who described their mental health as fair or poor, 17% had seen a psychologist in the past year, compared with 11% of males (results not shown).

Perception of stress level

In 2009, 25% of women aged 15 and over reported that most of their days were “quite a bit or extremely stressful,” which is slightly more than the proportion of men (22%). Women aged 35 to 44 were the most likely to report that most of their days were “quite a bit or extremely stressful” (Chart 3.2).

Chart 3.2

Persons reporting that most of their days were quite a bit stressful or extremely stressful, by age group, Canada, 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

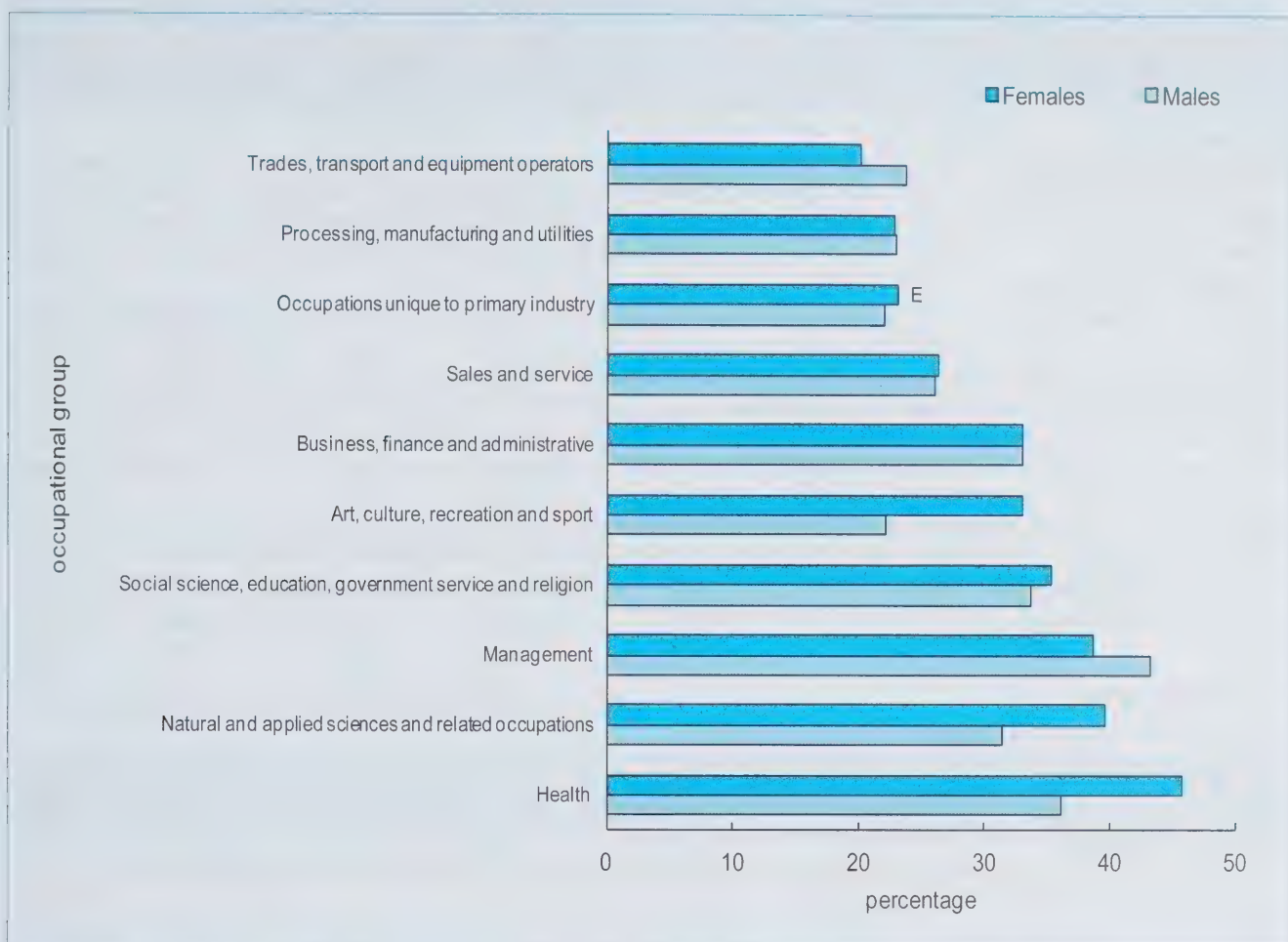
Family status is one of the factors that affected the level of stress experienced by women. The proportion of women aged 35 to 44 reporting that their days were quite a bit or extremely stressful was 41% for those who were lone parents and 38% for those living alone. By comparison, the corresponding proportion was 28% for women aged 35 to 44 living with a spouse and children (results not shown).

People experiencing stress at work are much more likely to perceive stress in their everyday life. However, not all occupations are associated with the same level of stress. In 2009, 46% of women working in the health sector described most of their days at work as being quite a bit or extremely stressful (Chart 3.3). Among female nursing professionals, this proportion even reached 54% (results not shown). By comparison, 26% of women engaged in occupations in the sales and services sector described most days at work as quite a bit or extremely stressful.

For some groups of occupations such as health, natural and applied sciences, and art, culture, sports and recreation, women reported a higher level of stress at work than men.

Chart 3.3

Persons who described most days at work as being quite a bit or extremely stressful, by occupational group, Canada, 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Fitness measures

The health benefits of being physically fit are many and well known to health experts.⁴⁹ In the Health Measures Survey (conducted from 2007 to 2009), various anthropometric measurements and fitness tests were administered to participants. The results provided an elaborate picture of various aspects of the population's physical fitness.

Table 3.3 shows a series of measurements compiled from this survey that illustrate various differences between women and men. The results are grouped into three categories: excellent/very good; good; fair/needs improvement. Note that the thresholds used to categorize participants are adjusted for both the age and sex of participants.

49. Shields, Margot, Mark S. Tremblay, Manon Laviolette, Cora L. Craig, Ian Janssen and Sarah Conner Gorber. 2010. *Fitness of Canadian adults: Results from the 2007-2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey*. Vol. 20, no. 4. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 82-003-X. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2010001/article/11064-eng.htm>

Table 3.3**Anthropometric measurements and fitness test results, by age group, Canada, 2009**

Anthropometric measurements	20 to 39		40 to 59	
	Females	Males	Females	Males
	percentage			
Aerobic fitness				
Fair/needs improvement	37	46	56	32
Good	40	26	20	40
Excellent/very good	23	27	24	28
Flexibility (sit-and-reach)				
Fair/needs improvement	55	61	47	42
Good	16	16	20	19
Excellent/very good	29	23	33	39
Muscular endurance (partial curl-ups)				
Fair/needs improvement	46	19	70	39
Good	10	7 ^E	9	5 ^E
Excellent/very good	44	75	21	56
Muscular strength (grip strength)				
Fair/needs improvement	56	42	36	35
Good	18	24 ^E	29	19 ^E
Excellent/very good	27	34	35	46
Overall musculoskeletal strength				
Fair/needs improvement	51	30	43	29
Good	28	32	36	30
Excellent/very good	21	38	21	41

Source: Statistics Canada. 2010. *Fitness of Canadian adults: Results from the 2007-2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey*. Catalogue no. 82-003-X.

Aerobic fitness

With regard to aerobic fitness, the gap between women and men varied from one age group to another. Among persons aged 20 to 39, the results for women were better than those for men: only 37% of women were considered to have a fitness level that was fair or needed improvement, compared with 46% of men in the same age group (Table 3.3). However, among persons aged 40 to 59, men had better results. Whereas for more than half of women (56%), aerobic fitness was found to be fair or in need of improvement, this was the case for less than one-third of men (32%).

Musculoskeletal health

Three components of musculoskeletal health were measured in the survey: flexibility, muscular endurance and muscular strength. According to health experts, "considerable evidence indicates that musculoskeletal fitness confers substantial health benefits, particularly among women and older people, including decreased risk of mortality, increased mobility, less functional impairment, greater independence, reduced likelihood of falls, lower levels of pain, and an overall increase in quality of life."⁵⁰

50. Shields, Margot, Mark S. Tremblay, Manon Laviolette, Cora L. Craig, Ian Janssen and Sarah Conner Gorber. 2010. *Fitness of Canadian adults: Results from the 2007-2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey*. Vol. 20, no. 4. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003-X, p. 2. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2010001/article/11064-eng.htm>

Women in the 20 to 39 age group scored higher than men in flexibility, with a larger proportion of them obtaining an “excellent” or a “very good” rating. For example, among persons aged 20 to 39, 29% of women had a “very good” rating, compared with 23% of men.

Unlike for flexibility, women scored lower than men for muscular endurance, measured by the ability to do curl-ups. Endurance was rated very good or excellent for 75% of men aged 20 to 39, compared with only 44% of women in this age group. As regards muscular strength, women in both age groups scored lower than men (even using different scales for the test results of women and men).

An overall assessment of musculoskeletal health was developed by combining the scores for flexibility, muscular endurance and strength. For this measure, women generally scored lower than men in both age groups. For example, only 21% of women aged 40 to 59 were found to have very good or excellent overall musculoskeletal health, compared with 41% of men in the same age group.

Satisfaction with life

Satisfaction with life is a personal subjective assessment of one's general well-being. To measure it, respondents to the Canadian Community Health Survey were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with life on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means very dissatisfied and 10 means very satisfied. Mean satisfaction scores were then calculated according to various characteristics, such as sex, age and income.

Overall, women scored 8 points out of 10 (8.0), indicating a high level of satisfaction (Table 3.4). The average level of satisfaction was higher for girls and women aged 12 to 24. This is probably due in part to the fact that health, which has a major impact on the level of satisfaction,⁵¹ is generally better among younger people (see Tables 3.1 and 3.4).

Table 3.4
Level of satisfaction with life, Canada, 2009

Age group, household income and perceived health	Females average score on satisfaction scale	Males
Total—Age groups	8.0	8.0
12 to 24	8.3	8.2
25 to 44	8.0	8.0
45 to 64	8.0	7.8
65 and over	8.0	8.0
Household income		
Lowest quintile	7.6	7.5
Second quintile	8.0	7.8
Third quintile	8.2	8.0
Fourth quintile	8.2	8.2
Highest quintile	8.4	8.3
Perceived health		
Fair or poor	6.5	6.5
Good	7.7	7.6
Very good or excellent	8.5	8.4

Notes: Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with life using a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means very unsatisfied and 10 means very satisfied. The scores shown represent average responses.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

51. Diener, E. 2005. “The Benefits of Frequent Positive Affect: Does Happiness Lead to Success?”. *Psychological Bulletin*. Vol. 131, no. 6, pp. 803-855.

A high income is associated with a higher level of satisfaction with life. Among women in the lowest income quintile (the 20% of persons with the lowest incomes), the average level of satisfaction with life was 7.6. By comparison, the average level was 8.4 for women in the highest income quintile.

Chronic health conditions

Chronic health conditions are varied in nature, and they do not all have the same effect on the quality of life of people who have them. In this section, we look at eight chronic health conditions either because they are more common, because women are especially subject to them or because they have a greater impact on the health system.⁵² For each of these eight conditions, differences between women and men are examined, along with the probability of having been diagnosed with the condition.

Prevalence of arthritis

The term “arthritis” describes many conditions (there are approximately one hundred) that affect the joints, the tissues surrounding the joints and other connective tissues. What all types of arthritis have in common is joint and musculoskeletal pain which, in the most severe cases, can greatly affect the quality of life. The most common types of arthritis are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.⁵³

Arthritis affects a larger proportion of females than males in all age groups. In 2009, 2.6 million females and 1.6 million males reported they had been diagnosed with arthritis (Table 3.5). The gender gap was especially large for seniors, who are at a time of life when this type of condition is particularly likely to develop.

52. Health Council of Canada. 2007. *Population Patterns of Chronic Health Conditions in Canada: A Data supplement to: Why Health Care Renewal Matters: Learning from Canadians with Chronic Health Conditions*. December. Toronto.

53. The Arthritis Society. <http://www.arthritis.ca> (accessed on August 10, 2010).

Table 3.5

Persons being diagnosed by a health professional as having certain chronic conditions, prevalence of these conditions and distribution of cases, by age group, Canada, 2009

Age group	Arthritis	Cancer number (thousands)	High blood pressure
Total—12 and over	4,210	510	4,812
Females	2,607	253	2,508
Males	1,603	257	2,304
12 to 24			
Females	35 ^E	x	15 ^E
Males	11 ^E	x	30 ^E
25 to 44			
Females	264	28 ^E	207
Males	181	18 ^E	277
45 to 64			
Females	1,121	103	1,037
Males	773	93	1,113
65 and over			
Females	1,187	113	1,249
Males	637	146	884
Prevalence within the population	percentage		
Total—12 and over	15.2	1.8	16.9
Females	18.5	1.7	17.3
Males	11.7	1.8	16.4
12 to 24			
Females	1.5 ^E	x	0.5 ^E
Males	0.5 ^E	x	1.0 ^E
25 to 44			
Females	5.7	0.6 ^E	4.5
Males	3.9	0.4 ^E	6.0
45 to 64			
Females	23.9	2.2	22.1
Males	16.8	2.0	24.3
65 and over			
Females	49.6	4.7	52.2
Males	32.3	7.4	44.9
Distribution of diagnosed cases	percentage		
Total—12 and over	100.0	100.0	100.0
12 to 24			
Females	0.8 ^E	x	0.3 ^E
Males	0.3 ^E	x	0.6 ^E
25 to 44			
Females	6.3	5.5 ^E	4.3
Males	4.3	3.5 ^E	5.8
45 to 64			
Females	26.6	20.1	21.6
Males	18.4	18.2	23.1
65 and over			
Females	28.2	22.1	25.9
Males	15.1	28.6	18.4

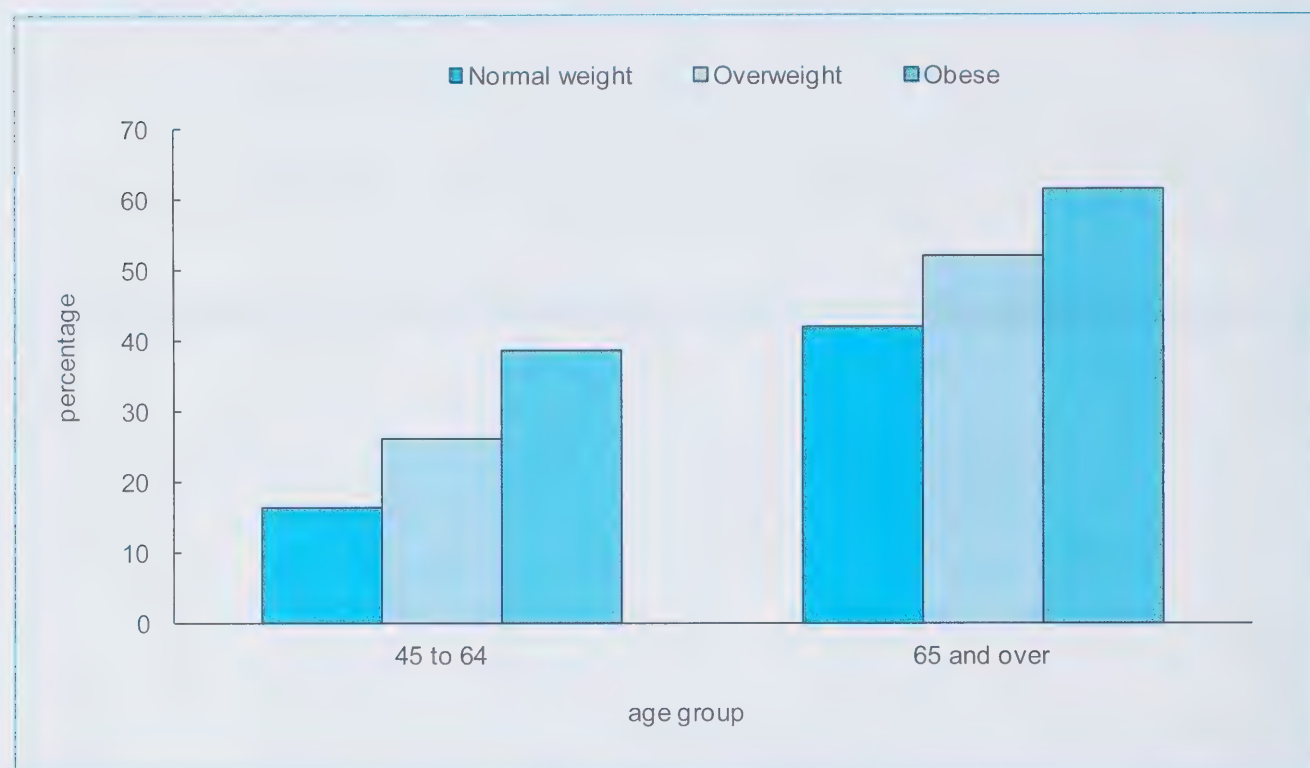
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

In 2009, 50% of women aged 65 and over reported they had arthritis, compared with 32% of men. Of those aged 85 and over and living in a private household, the proportion of women with arthritis was 57%, compared with 43% of men in this age group (results not shown). Since arthritis is strongly associated with age, its prevalence can be expected to rise as the population ages.⁵⁴

People who are overweight or obese are more likely to have arthritis than those of normal weight. In 2009, among women aged 45 to 64, the prevalence of arthritis was 39% for those who were obese, 26% for those who were overweight and 16% for those with a normal weight (Chart 3.4). Among seniors, the proportion of women diagnosed with arthritis was 61% for obese women, compared with 52% for overweight women and 42% for those with a normal weight.

Chart 3.4

Prevalence of arthritis among women according to self-reported body mass index and age group, Canada, 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

It is known that moderate to vigorous physical activity can help people with arthritis to ease the pain caused by the condition and improve their quality of life.⁵⁵ Women aged 45 to 64 with arthritis were roughly as inclined as their male counterparts in the same age group to be physically active during their leisure time (44% of women and 45% of men were active or moderately active). However, among persons aged 65 and over, only 31% of women with arthritis were active or moderately active, compared with 46% of men with arthritis (results not shown).

54. Public Health Agency of Canada. 2010. *Life with arthritis in Canada: A public health and personal challenge*.

Catalogue no. HP35-17/2010E. Ottawa.

55. Ibid.

Cancer

Cancer is not the most common form of chronic condition within the population, but it is certainly the one that causes the greatest number of deaths. According to the Canadian Cancer Society, nearly 40% of women and 45% of men in Canada will develop cancer during their lifetimes and one in four Canadians will die of cancer.⁵⁶

In 2009, 253,000 females and 257,000 males aged 12 and over reported having cancer (Table 3.5). Before age 45, the prevalence of cancer is relatively low (slightly under half of 1% for those aged 25 to 44). However, by age 45, rates show a perceptible increase. In the 45 to 64 age group, 2% of women had cancer, the same proportion as for men. The rate rose to 5% for women aged 65 and over and to 7% for their male counterparts.

When examining administrative data from the Canadian Cancer Registry, one observes that the number of new cancer cases has increased almost constantly in the past fifteen years, for both women and men. Whereas there were 53,838 new cases of cancer among females in 1992, this number grew to 78,099 in 2007 (Table 3.6).

The rates of new cancer cases also rose during this period. In 1992, there were 376.1 new cancer cases per 100,000 females, a rate that rose to 470.3 per 100,000 females in 2007. This rate, however, remained lower for females than for males (523.3 new cases of cancer per 100,000 males in 2007) (results not shown).

Table 3.6
New cancer cases, by primary site of cancer, Canada, 1992 to 2007

Primary site of cancer	1992	1997	2002	2007	% increase 1992 to 2007
number of new cancer cases					
Females					
Total—All primary sites of cancer	53,838	59,974	69,404	78,099	45
Breast	15,707	17,633	19,644	21,021	34
Lung and bronchus	6,197	7,318	8,892	10,404	68
Colorectal	7,047	7,380	8,592	9,267	32
Corpus uteri	2,828	3,149	3,658	4,359	54
Thyroid	995	1,240	2,209	3,250	227
Others	21,064	23,254	26,409	29,798	41
Males					
Total—All primary sites of cancer	61,813	64,954	74,463	85,430	38
Prostate	15,302	15,995	19,601	23,181	51
Lung and bronchus	11,491	11,179	11,855	12,461	8
Colorectal	7,922	8,299	10,014	11,198	41
Bladder (including in situ)	3,732	4,108	4,445	4,933	32
Non-Hodgkin's lymphomas	2,259	2,729	3,056	3,763	67
Others	21,107	22,644	25,492	29,894	42

Notes: Only the five main primary sites for females and males were included in this table. For more details on other sites, see CANSIM table 103-0550.

Source: Statistics Canada, Database of the Canadian Cancer Registry.

56. Canadian Cancer Society. <http://www.cancer.ca> (accessed on August 17, 2010).

The most common cancer reported by women is breast cancer (21,021 new cases in 2007). From 1992 to 2007, the number of diagnosed cases grew substantially, increasing by 34%. However, a larger increase was seen for cancer of the lung and bronchus, the second most prevalent cancer for women. In fact, from 1992 to 2007, the number of new cases of lung cancer grew by 68% among women. This is due to the fact that before the Second World War, very few women smoked, a situation that has subsequently changed (see section on health-related behaviours).

High blood pressure

High blood pressure is the main risk factor for stroke, and it contributes to the risk of heart attack and kidney failure. Also, high blood pressure can reduce the diameter of arteries and block them. It can also exert pressure on organs and weaken them.⁵⁷

In 2009, approximately 2.5 million females aged 12 and over (17%) reported being diagnosed with high blood pressure, compared with 2.3 million males (16%) (Table 3.5). A breakdown by age group reveals that it is mainly during the senior years that women stand out from men. In 2009, 52% of women aged 65 and over were diagnosed with high blood pressure, compared with 45% of men. Conversely, among persons aged 45 to 64, the prevalence was somewhat lower for women than for men.

In recent years, an increasing proportion of both women and men have been diagnosed with high blood pressure. Among women aged 65 and over, the prevalence of high blood pressure went from 47% in 2003 to 52% in 2009 (results not shown).

Heart disease

After malignant tumours, heart disease is the second most prevalent cause of death, for both women and men. Women are somewhat less likely than men to be diagnosed with heart disease. In the 45 to 64 age group, 4% of women had heart disease, compared with 7% of men. This gap also existed in the 65 and over group, with 15% of women diagnosed compared with 19% of men (Table 3.7).

57. Heart and Stroke Foundation. <http://www.heartandstroke.com> (accessed on August 10, 2010).

Table 3.7

Persons diagnosed by a health professional as having certain conditions, prevalence of these conditions and distribution of cases, by age group, Canada, 2009

Age group	Diabetes	Heart disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) ¹	Mood disorders	Anxiety
			number (thousands)		
Total—12 and over	1,706	1,309	780	1,812	1,432
Females	769	569	425	1,173	905
Males	937	740	356	639	527
12 to 24					
Females	13 ^E	12 ^E	..	126	167
Males	F	13 ^E	..	74	103
25 to 44					
Females	75	39	49	412	302
Males	80	35 ^E	46 ^E	212	192
45 to 64					
Females	326	165	183	477	317
Males	407	308	137	272	180
65 and over					
Females	355	352	193	157	119
Males	436	384	173	82	52
Prevalence within the population			percentage		
Total—12 and over	6.0	4.6	4.2	6.3	5.0
Females	5.3	3.9	4.5	8.1	6.3
Males	6.6	5.3	4.0	4.5	3.7
12 to 24					
Females	0.5 ^E	0.4 ^E	..	4.6	6.1
Males	F	0.4 ^E	..	2.5	3.5
25 to 44					
Females	1.6	0.8	2.0	8.9	6.5
Males	1.7	0.8 ^E	1.9 ^E	4.6	4.2
45 to 64					
Females	6.9	3.5	3.9	10.2	6.8
Males	8.9	6.7	3.0	5.9	3.9
65 and over					
Females	14.8	14.8	8.1	6.5	5.0
Males	22.1	19.5	8.8	4.1	2.6
Distribution of diagnosed cases			percentage		
Total—12 and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
12 to 24					
Females	0.7 ^E	0.9 ^E	..	7.0	11.7
Males	F	1.0 ^E	..	4.1	7.2
25 to 44					
Females	4.4	3.0	6.3	22.8	21.1
Males	4.7	2.7 ^E	5.9 ^E	11.7	13.4
45 to 64					
Females	19.1	12.6	23.4	26.3	22.1
Males	23.9	23.5	17.5	15.0	12.6
65 and over					
Females	20.8	26.9	24.7	8.7	8.3
Males	25.6	29.3	22.2	4.5	3.6

1. Only for people aged 35 and over.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

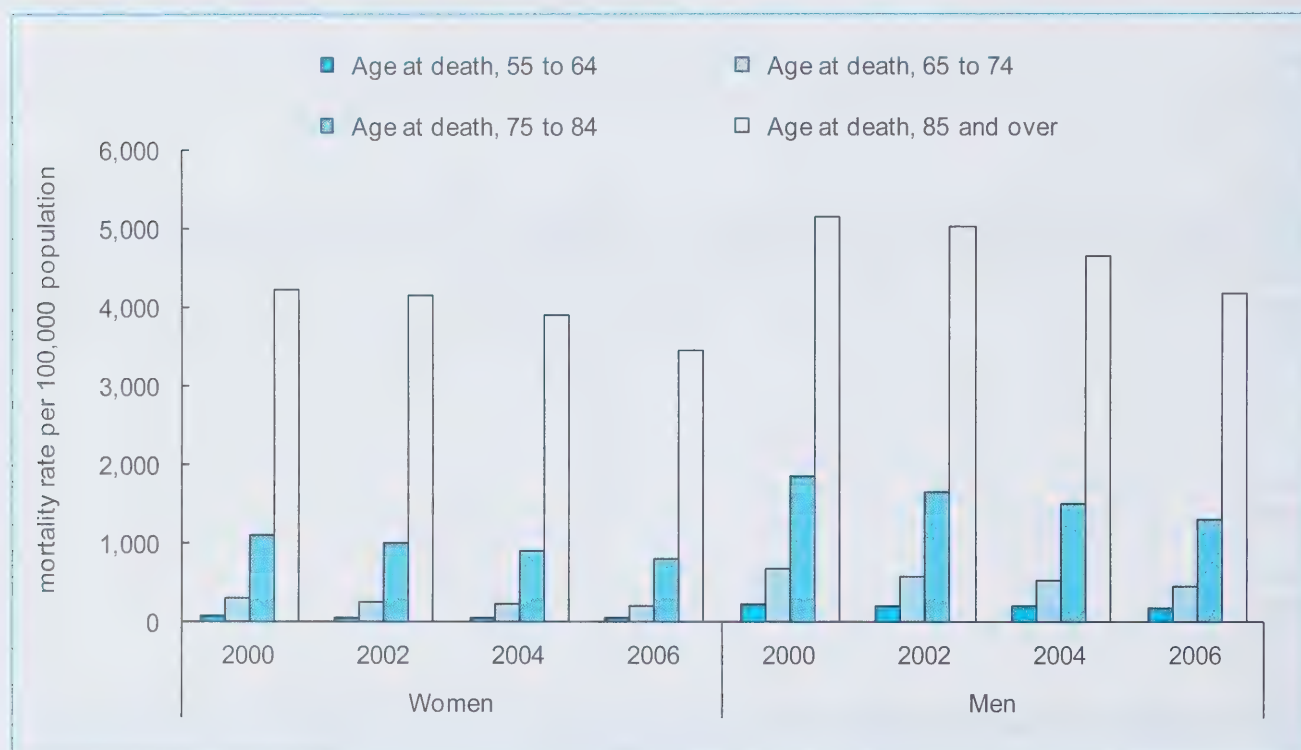
Researchers have identified age, low income (especially for women), chronic stress and family history as risk factors for heart disease, as well as a number of others that can be acted upon; these include smoking, obesity, physical inactivity, excessive alcohol consumption and high blood pressure.⁵⁸

Among people aged 45 to 64 with heart disease, women were more likely than men to have made changes to improve their health. Thus, in 2007-2008, 70% of women aged 45 to 64 who had been diagnosed with heart disease reported that they had taken steps to improve their health in the past year (such as stopping smoking, eating better and getting exercise). By comparison, 59% of men reported doing so (results not shown). However, among persons aged 65 and over, women who had been diagnosed with heart disease were no more likely than men to have made lifestyle changes.

In the past few years, according to administrative data, death rates for heart disease have declined for all age groups (Chart 3.5). They continue to be lower for women than for men. However, according to some studies, women are at greater risk than men of dying in the first year after a heart attack.⁵⁹

Chart 3.5

Mortality rates for heart disease, by age group at death, Canada, 2000 to 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Birth Database, Death Database and Estimates of the Population.

58. Heart and Stroke Foundation. <http://www.heartandstroke.com> (accessed on August 17, 2010).

59. Lloyd-Jones D, R. Adams, T. Brown and al. 2010. "Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics 2010 Update: A Report from the American Heart Association Statistics Committee and Stroke Statistics Subcommittee". *Circulation*. Vol.121, pp. e1-e170.

Diabetes

Diabetes develops when the body does not produce enough insulin or does not effectively use the insulin it produces. Diabetes can adversely affect quality of life or lead to complications such as heart disease, stroke and kidney disease.⁶⁰ It has been shown that diabetes is highly correlated with income level for women, but not for men.⁶¹

Before age 45, diabetes is not common, and its prevalence differs little between women and men. However, among seniors, women are proportionally less likely than men to be diabetic. In 2009, 15% of women aged 65 and over reported having diabetes, compared with 22% of men (Table 3.7).

The number of diagnosed cases of diabetes and the prevalence of this disease are increasing, for both women and men. In the space of just six years, the number of women with diabetes increased by nearly 200,000, with the number of diagnosed cases going from 578,000 in 2003 to 769,000 in 2009. By comparison, the number of men with diabetes reached 937,000 in 2009.

The increase in obesity explains in part the greater prevalence of diabetes. Among obese women aged 65 and over, the proportion with diabetes was 29% in 2009, compared with only 13% of those who were overweight and 9% of those who were of normal weight (results not shown). By comparison, 37% of obese men aged 65 and over had diabetes, as did 16% of those who were of normal weight. In general, obesity is more strongly associated with the development of diabetes problems for women than for men.

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a generic term describing chronic lung diseases that obstruct airflow in the lungs. The two most common forms of COPD are emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Symptoms include shortness of breath, wheezing and coughing with mucus. Tobacco use is the main cause of COPD.

In 2009, the proportion of persons aged 35 and over who reported being diagnosed with COPD was 4.2%. There was no measurable difference between men and women in this regard (Table 3.7). That said, female smokers were more likely to have been diagnosed with COPD than male smokers (9% and 5% respectively) (results not shown).

Mood and anxiety disorders

Mood disorders, including depression, bipolar disorder, mania or dysthymia, can greatly affect the lives of those who suffer from them. It has been estimated that depression has a greater impact on job performance than chronic conditions such as arthritis, hypertension, back problems and diabetes.⁶²

The percentage of Canadians reporting a mood disorder diagnosed by a professional was 6%, or approximately 1,812,000 persons in 2009, with significantly greater prevalence among women (Table 3.7). Indeed, in that year, nearly two-thirds of diagnosed mood disorders were reported by women.

60. James, Robert, T. Kue Young, Cameron A. Mustard and Jamie Blanchard. 1998. "The health of Canadians with Diabetes". *Health Reports*. Vol. 9, no. 3. Winter. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/1997003/3477-eng.pdf>

61. Ross, Nancy, Heather Gilmour and Kaberi Dasgupta. 2010. "14-year diabetes incidence: The role of socio-economic status". *Health Reports*. Vol. 21, no. 3. September. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2010003/article/11325-eng.htm>

62. Statistics Canada. 2010. "Mood disorders". *Health Fact Sheets*.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-625-x/2010002/article/11265-eng.htm> (accessed on August 19, 2010).

While women are roughly as likely as men to describe their mental health as very good or excellent (see Chart 3.1), they are more likely to turn to a doctor or health specialist when they experience a mood disorder.⁶³ For example, in 2009, of females aged 12 and over who described their mental health as fair or poor, 17% had seen a psychologist in the previous year, compared with 11% of males (results not shown). Since women have a greater tendency to ask for help, it is also more likely that they will be diagnosed with a mental health problem.

In some age groups, the proportion of women with a diagnosed mood disorder was almost twice that of men. Among persons aged 25 to 44 for example, 412,000 women or 8.9% reported a mood disorder in 2009, compared with 4.6% of men in this age group (Table 3.7).

Anxiety disorders, whether in the form of a phobia, an obsessive compulsive disorder or a panic disorder, are encountered somewhat less often than mood disorders. In 2009, approximately 905,000 females and 527,000 males had been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. The highest prevalence of anxiety disorders was among women aged 45 to 64 (6.8% had been so diagnosed). By comparison, this was the case with 3.9% of men in this age group (Table 3.7). Once again, the fact that women have a greater tendency to consult a professional might partly explain this difference with men.

Women with an anxiety disorder were much more likely to have also been diagnosed with a mood disorder. In 2009, 45% of women and girls aged 12 and over who had been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder had also been diagnosed with a mood disorder (depression, bipolar disorder, mania). Among those who had not been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, the proportion who had a mood disorder was only 5.6%. Once again, these results must be interpreted with caution since they refer to anxiety disorders diagnosed by a health professional. Some people with a mental health problem may keep it to themselves.

Effects of chronic conditions

People with chronic conditions can often manage to adapt to their condition and continue living an active life. However, their quality of life may be affected in various ways. In particular, reconciling one's work life with the pain and discomfort caused by a chronic condition can pose a challenge for many people. In 2009, among women aged 45 to 64 who had no chronic condition, the proportion holding a job in the previous week was 78%. By comparison, the corresponding proportion was only 65% of those with a chronic condition and 50% of those with two or more chronic conditions. For women at all education levels, having a chronic condition reduces the probability of having a job (Table 3.8).

Table 3.8

Impact of chronic conditions on labour market participation and personal income of women aged 45 to 64, by education level, Canada, 2009

Education level	Women aged 45 to 64					
	No chronic condition	One chronic condition	Two or more chronic conditions	No chronic condition	One chronic condition	Two or more chronic conditions
	percentage employed			average personal income (dollars)		
Total	78.0	65.0	49.6	43,100	35,600	25,800
Less than secondary school	54.2	46.1	32.2	15,800	19,000 ^E	14,800
Secondary diploma	76.5	61.4	53.7	33,700	29,500	23,400
College diploma or trade certificate	80.9	70.0	54.0	40,600	33,100	26,100
University degree	84.7	73.7	59.1	63,500	58,000	48,000

Note: Eight chronic health conditions were examined: arthritis, cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), mood disorder and anxiety disorder. The estimates exclude residents of the territories.

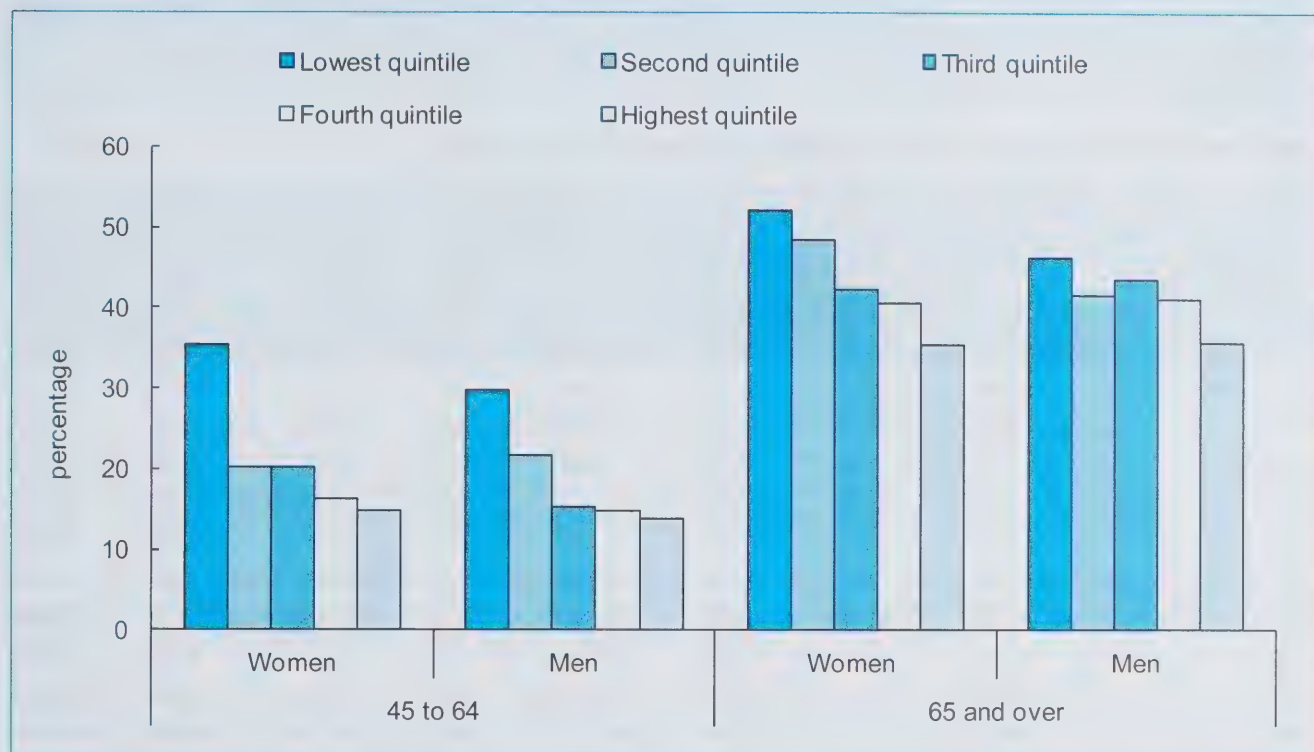
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

63. Romans, Sarah. 2006. "Being female: a key risk factor for depression". *Research and Practice issues for Canadian Physicians*. pp. 36-38.

The links between socio-economic status and the risks of developing chronic conditions are complex. People with lower income have a greater probability of developing chronic conditions for many reasons (stress, diet and access to nutritious foods at an affordable price, type of jobs held, smoking, etc.). Also, they are more at risk of having two or more chronic conditions simultaneously. For example, in 2009, among women aged 45 to 64 in the low-income group, 35% had been diagnosed with at least two chronic health problems; by comparison, the proportion was 15% for women in the same age group whose incomes were in the upper quintile (Chart 3.6).

Chart 3.6

Percentage of persons with two or more chronic health conditions, by age group and income quintile, Canada, 2009



Note: Eight chronic health conditions were examined: arthritis, cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), mood disorder and anxiety disorder.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Low income is known to be linked to greater risks of developing various health problems. People who have developed a chronic condition may also see their financial resources reduced if, for example, their condition forces them to quit work. In particular, this may be the case with more educated women who are more likely to have a well-paid job. If we consider only women aged 45 to 64 who had a university degree, those with no chronic condition had a substantially higher personal income (\$63,500 on average) than those who had two or more such conditions (\$48,000) (Table 3.8).⁶⁴

64. These estimates exclude residents of the territories.

HIV and AIDS

As described by the Public Health Agency of Canada, “HIV—the Human Immunodeficiency Virus—is a virus that attacks the immune system resulting in a chronic, progressive illness that leaves people vulnerable to opportunistic infections and cancers. When the body can no longer fight infection, the resulting disease is known as AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome). On average, it takes more than 10 years for the disease to progress from HIV infection to AIDS”.⁶⁵

Even though men are more likely to be HIV-positive (especially men who have sexual relations with other men), a sizable number of women are HIV-positive. According to data from the Canadian Public Health Agency, in 2009 there were 609 positive HIV test reports for females, compared with 1,759 for males (Table 3.9). In 2009, women accounted for 26% of the 2,368 positive HIV tests reported in 2009. This proportion has changed little in recent years.

Table 3.9
Number of new cases of HIV infection, Canada, 1985 to 2009

Year of test	Positive tests							
	Females			Males			Total	
	number	%	cumulative total	number	%	cumulative total	number	cumulative total
1985 to 1999	5,306	13.1	5,306	35,266	86.9	35,266	40,572	40,572
2000	482	23.9	5,788	1,533	76.1	36,799	2,015	42,587
2001	540	25.2	6,328	1,603	74.8	38,402	2,143	44,730
2002	614	25.5	6,942	1,793	74.5	40,195	2,407	47,137
2003	623	25.5	7,565	1,816	74.5	42,011	2,439	49,576
2004	648	26.2	8,213	1,825	73.8	43,836	2,473	52,049
2005	619	25.4	8,832	1,818	74.6	45,654	2,437	54,486
2006	692	27.7	9,524	1,802	72.3	47,456	2,494	56,980
2007	602	25.1	10,126	1,798	74.9	49,254	2,400	59,380
2008	668	25.8	10,794	1,919	74.2	51,173	2,587	61,967
2009	609	25.7	11,403	1,759	74.3	52,932	2,368	64,335

Source: Public Health Agency of Canada. 2010. *HIV and AIDS in Canada. Surveillance Report to December 31, 2009*, Surveillance and Risk Assessment Division, Centre for Communicable Diseases and Infection Control.

Risk factors and health-related behaviours

As a result of awareness campaigns by public health authorities, most people know the various factors that contribute to good health: engaging in physical activity, having a healthy diet, not smoking, not consuming alcohol excessively, and controlling one's stress level. However, actually putting all this into practice is not always easy. This section looks at differences between women and men with regard to their adoption of lifestyles that are conducive to good health.

63. Public Health Agency of Canada. <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca> (accessed on September 27, 2010).

Tobacco use

Tobacco use is losing ground in Canada, among both women and men. In 2009, 2.6 million women and girls aged 12 and over (approximately 18%) were considered smokers, meaning that they smoked on a daily basis or occasionally. In comparison, the number of female smokers in 2003 had been 2.8 million (21%) (Table 3.10).

Table 3.10
Prevalence of smoking by age group, Canada, 2003 and 2009

Age group	Persons smoking every day or occasionally											
	Both sexes		Females		Males		Both sexes		Females		Males	
	2003	2009	2003	2009	2003	2009	2003	2009	2003	2009	2003	2009
	percentage				number							
Total—												
12 and over	23.0	20.1	21.0	17.7	25.1	22.6	6,085,000	5,730,000	2,818,000	2,561,000	3,267,000	3,169,000
12 to 19	14.9	11.0	15.3	9.8	14.4	12.2	490,000	371,000	246,000	161,000	244,000	210,000
20 to 34	30.0	26.5	26.5	23.0	33.5	29.9	1,887,000	1,765,000	830,000	765,000	1,057,000	1,001,000
35 to 44	28.3	22.6	25.4	19.9	31.2	25.3	1,495,000	1,089,000	665,000	480,000	831,000	609,000
45 to 64	23.1	22.5	21.7	20.3	24.5	24.8	1,803,000	2,086,000	856,000	950,000	946,000	1,136,000
65 and over	10.9	9.6	10.5	8.6	11.5	10.9	410,000	419,000	221,000	206,000	189,000	213,000

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2003 and 2009.

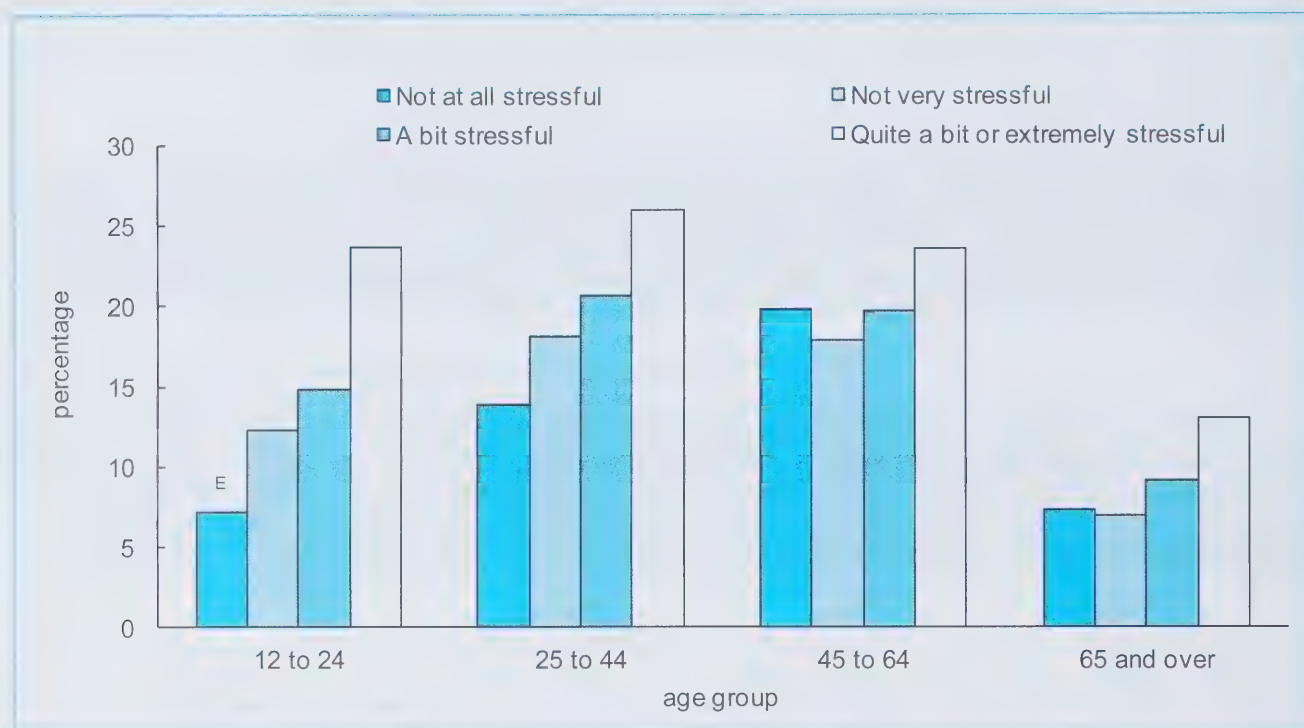
Women are less likely than men to use tobacco. In 2009, 18% of females aged 12 and over were smokers, compared with 23% of males. The gender difference was smaller among those aged 12 to 19 and those aged 65 and over—the two age groups with the lowest smoking rates. However, there was a larger gender gap for people aged 20 to 34. In this age group, 23% of women were smokers, compared with 30% of men.

Women with the lowest incomes were the biggest tobacco users. In 2009, among women aged 25 to 64 whose household income was in the lowest quintile, 30% were smokers, compared with 15% of women in the same age group living in the highest-income households (results not shown).

According to some studies, exposure to stress can lead to behaviours such as smoking. Moreover, findings show that persons who considered most of their days to be quite or extremely stressful were more likely to be smokers than others. Among women aged 25 to 44, the proportion of smokers reached 26% for those reporting the highest level of stress, compared to 14% for those reporting that most days were not at all stressful (Chart 3.7).

Chart 3.7

Percentage of women who are smokers, by perceived level of stress and age group, Canada, 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Heavy drinking

Most researchers in epidemiology recognize that moderate consumption of alcohol is not harmful to health, and some contend that it can be positive in some respects (e.g. the effect of red wine on heart disease). However, heavy drinking, which is generally defined as having five or more drinks on one occasion at least once a month, can pose a risk for health and well-being.

Heavy drinking is much less frequent among women than among men. In 2009, 10% of all women (including non-drinkers) reported heavy drinking, compared with 25% of men (Table 3.11). The largest difference between women and men was observed in the 45-to-64 age group, in which 23% of men were heavy drinkers, almost three times the percentage of women (8%).

Table 3.11
Persons who reported heavy drinking, by age group, Canada, 2003 and 2009

Age group	Consumed five or more drinks on one occasion, at least once a month in the last year					
	Both sexes		Females		Males	
	2003	2009	2003	2009	2003	2009
	percentage					
Total—12 and over	16.6	17.2	8.8	9.9	24.5	24.8
12 to 19	14.3	14.0	10.7	11.2	17.8	16.8
20 to 34	28.2	30.1	17.0	19.7	39.4	40.5
35 to 44	18.2	16.9	9.2	8.8	27.0	25.0
45 to 64	13.2	15.4	5.5	7.5	21.1	23.3
65 and over	3.8	4.5	1.1	1.3	7.2	8.3

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2003 and 2009.

Overweight and obesity

Although being overweight is not directly associated with poor health, the risk of developing problems is much greater for obese persons. For many years, the proportion of adults (both male and female) considered obese has been on the rise.⁶⁶ According to measures of weight and height, women are neither more nor less likely than men to be obese (Table 3.12).

Table 3.12
Body mass index category, by age group, Canada, 2007 to 2009

Body mass index category	20 to 39	40 to 59	60 to 69
	percentage		
Normal weight			
Females	50	45	30
Males	43	21	26
Overweight			
Females	23	31	37
Males	37	52	39
Obese			
Females	21	24	33
Males	19	27	34

Notes: The body mass index (BMI) (kg/m^2) was used to classify participants as being of normal weight (BMI between $18.5 \text{ kg}/\text{m}^2$ and $24.9 \text{ kg}/\text{m}^2$), overweight (BMI between $25 \text{ kg}/\text{m}^2$ and $29.9 \text{ kg}/\text{m}^2$) or obese (BMI equal to or greater than $30 \text{ kg}/\text{m}^2$).

Source: Statistics Canada. 2010. *Fitness of Canadian adults: Results from the 2007-2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey*. Catalogue no. 82-003-X.

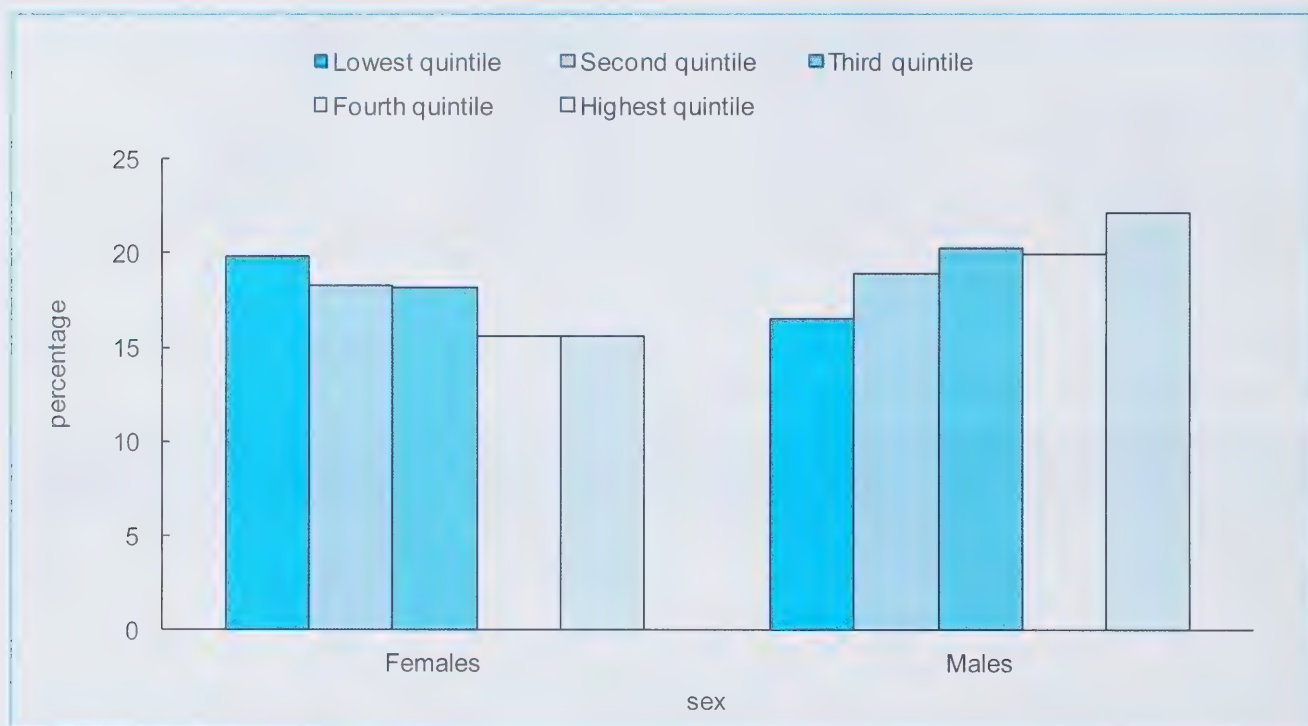
66. Orpana, Heather M., Mark S. Tremblay and Philippe Finès. 2007. "Trends in weight change among Canadian adults." *Health Reports*. Vol. 18, no. 2, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2006005/article/9633-eng.htm>

However, among persons under 60 years of age, women are less likely to be overweight than men. More specifically, 23% of women aged 20 to 39 had a body mass index classifying them as overweight, compared with 37% of men. For ages 40 to 59, overweight rates were respectively 31% for women and 52% for men. In the same age group, the proportion of women with a normal weight was practically double that of men (45% versus 21%).

In Canada, as in a number of other countries, people with lower income are generally in poorer health (see section on well-being and measures of health). The situation is different, at least for men, when looking at body mass index based on self-reported weight and height. For them, the higher the income, the greater the probability of being obese (Chart 3.8). For women, however, the usual relationship is observed: the higher the income, the lower the probability of being obese. At present there is no consensus as to the factors that might explain these differing results for men and women.⁶⁷

Chart 3.8

Percentage of persons aged 12 and over who are obese, by income quintile, Canada, 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

67. Kuhle, Stefan and Paul J. Veugelers. 2008. "Why does the social gradient in health not apply to overweight?". *Health Reports*. Vol. 19, no. 4. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2008004/article/10746-eng.htm>

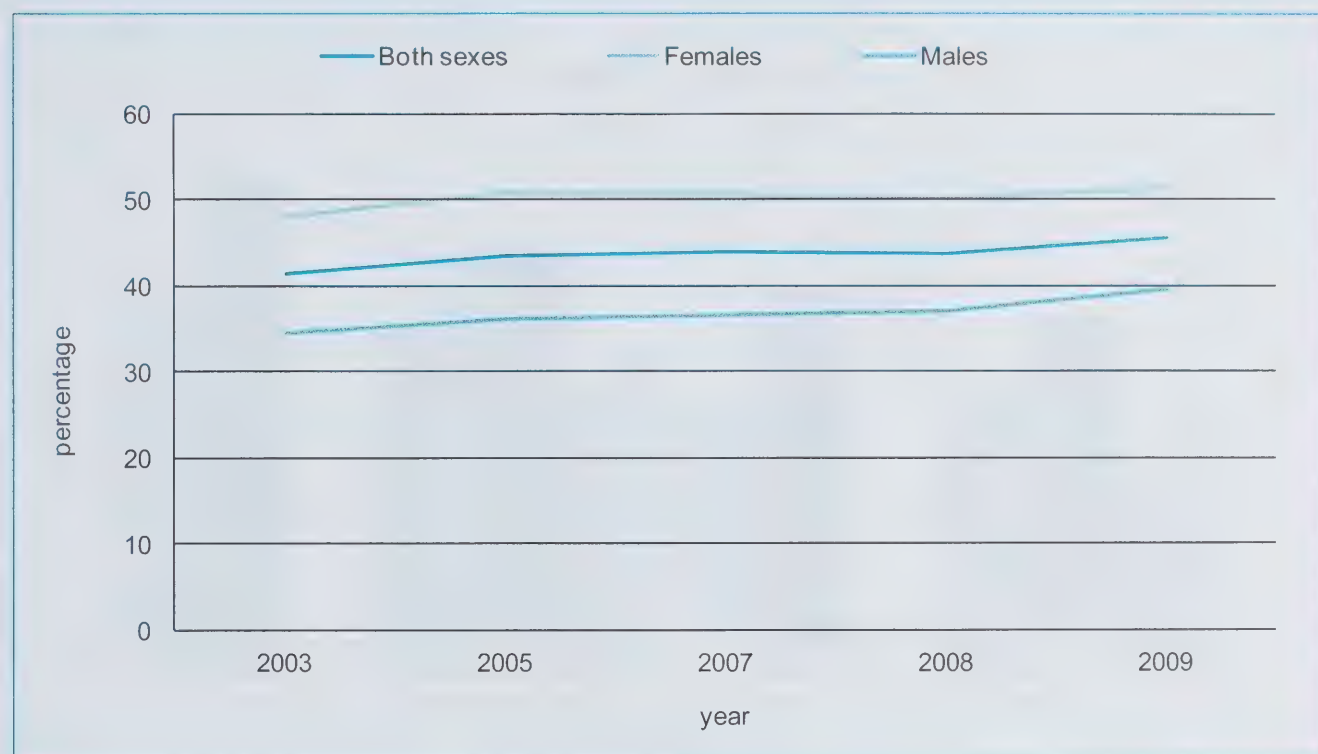
Fruit and vegetable consumption

In addition to limiting their consumption of salt, fat and sugar, people can improve their diet, and hence their health, by consuming a sufficient quantity of fruits and vegetables. Research has shown that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables helps to prevent heart disease and some types of cancer.⁶⁸

The frequency of fruit and vegetable consumption has been rising for the last few years. In 2003, the proportion of persons aged 12 and over who consumed fruits and vegetables at least five times a day was 41%. In 2009, the proportion was 46% (Chart 3.9).

Chart 3.9

Consumption of fruits and vegetables five or more times per day, persons aged 12 and over, Canada, 2003 to 2009



Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

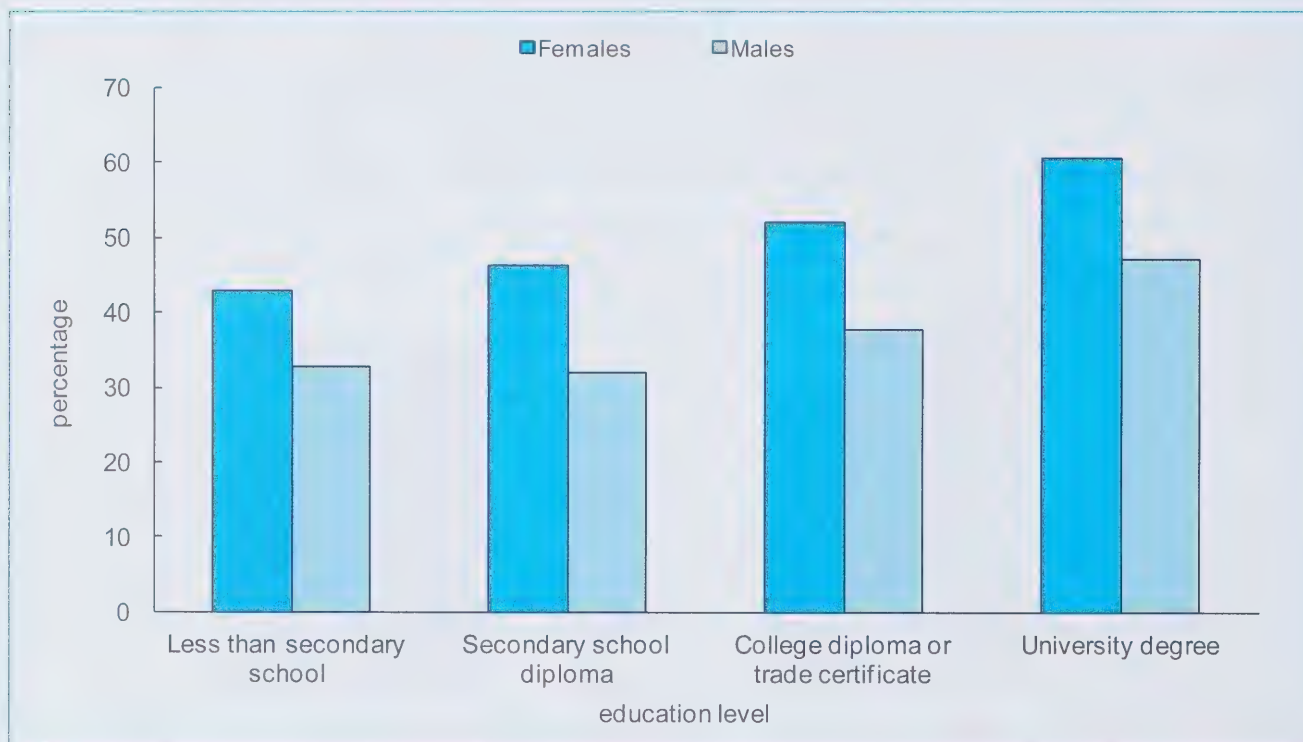
68. Pérez, Claudio E. 2002. "Fruit and vegetable consumption." *Health Reports*. Vol. 13, no. 3. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2001003/article/6103-eng.pdf>

In 2009, 51% of women aged 12 and over reported consuming fruits and vegetables at least five times per day, compared with only 40% of men.

For both women and men, education level has a major effect on consumption of fruits and vegetables. Nevertheless, women at all education levels appear to be more receptive than men to the idea of including sufficient quantities of fruits and vegetables in their diet. Women whose highest education level was secondary school were almost as likely as men with a university degree to consume five or more portions of fruits and vegetables per day (Chart 3.10). A similar relationship existed with respect to income: whereas 45% of women belonging to the lowest income quintile consumed five portions of fruits and vegetables per day, 56% of women with the highest incomes did so (results not shown).

Chart 3.10

Persons aged 25 and over who consume five or more portions of fruits and vegetables per day, by education level, Canada, 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

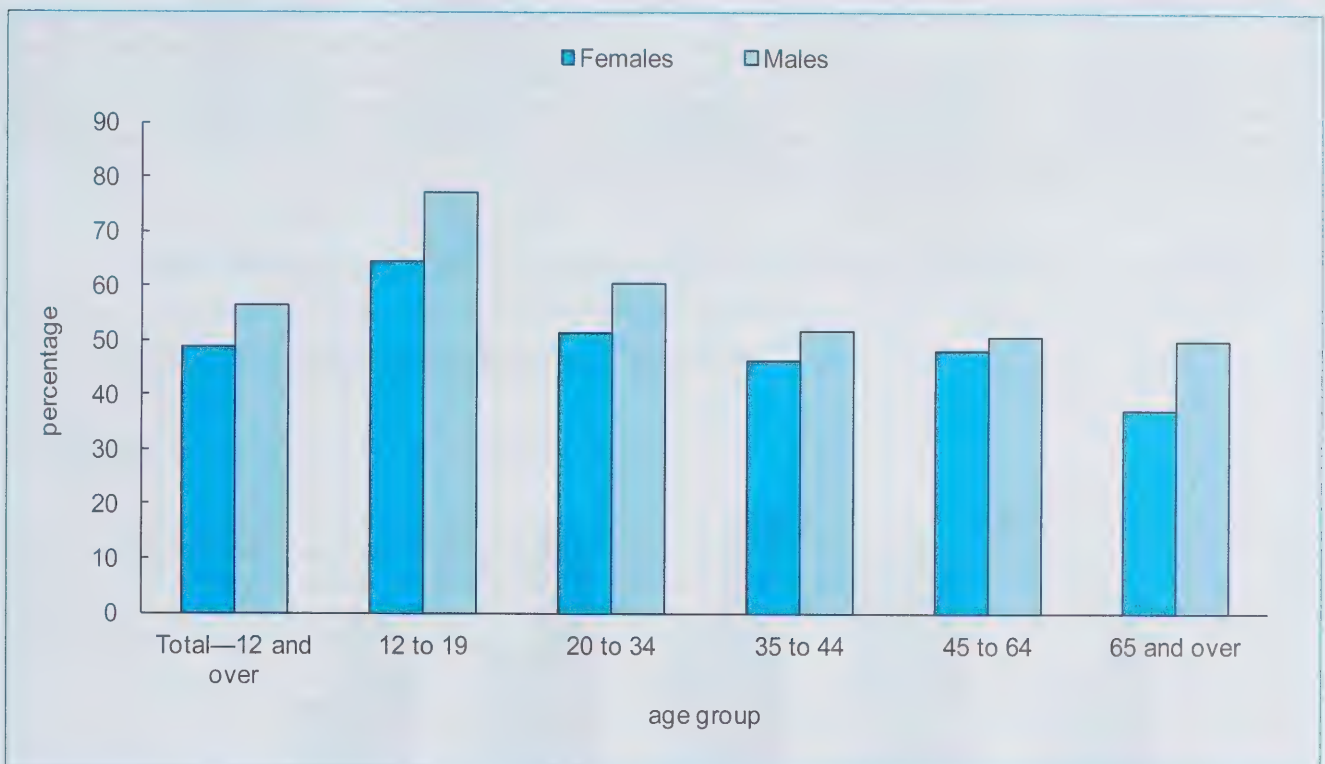
Leisure-time physical activity

Various studies have shown that regular physical exercise can reduce the risk of heart disease, some types of cancer, osteoporosis, diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure, stress and anxiety.⁶⁹ In general, physically active people are less likely to be obese or overweight. However, the relationship also goes in the opposite direction, since people who are obese are also less likely to exercise.

Women are somewhat less likely than men to practice physical exercise during their leisure time. In 2009, 49% of females and 56% of males aged 12 and over were considered to be moderately active or active during their leisure time. This level of activity is equivalent to approximately 30 minutes of walking per day or to taking an hour-long exercise class at least three times per week (Chart 3.11).

Chart 3.11

Persons who reported being moderately active or active during their leisure time, by age group, Canada, 2009



Note: Level of activity equivalent to approximately 30 minutes of walking per day or to taking an hour-long exercise class at least three times per week.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Women aged 65 and over registered the lowest prevalence of leisure-time physical activity (37% compared with 50% for men). A similar gender difference was also observed among 12- to 19-year-olds. In 2009, 77% of males in this age group were at least moderately active, compared with 65% of females.

69. Gilmour, Heather. 2007. "Physically active Canadians." *Health Reports*. Vol. 18, no. 3. August. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2006008/article/phys/10307-eng.htm>

Household food security and insecurity

Food security is considered to exist in a household when all its members, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food for an active and healthy life. Conversely, food insecurity occurs when food quality or quantity is compromised, a situation typically associated with limited financial resources. Such a case can result in numerous negative health consequences: development of chronic conditions, obesity, distress and depression.⁷⁰

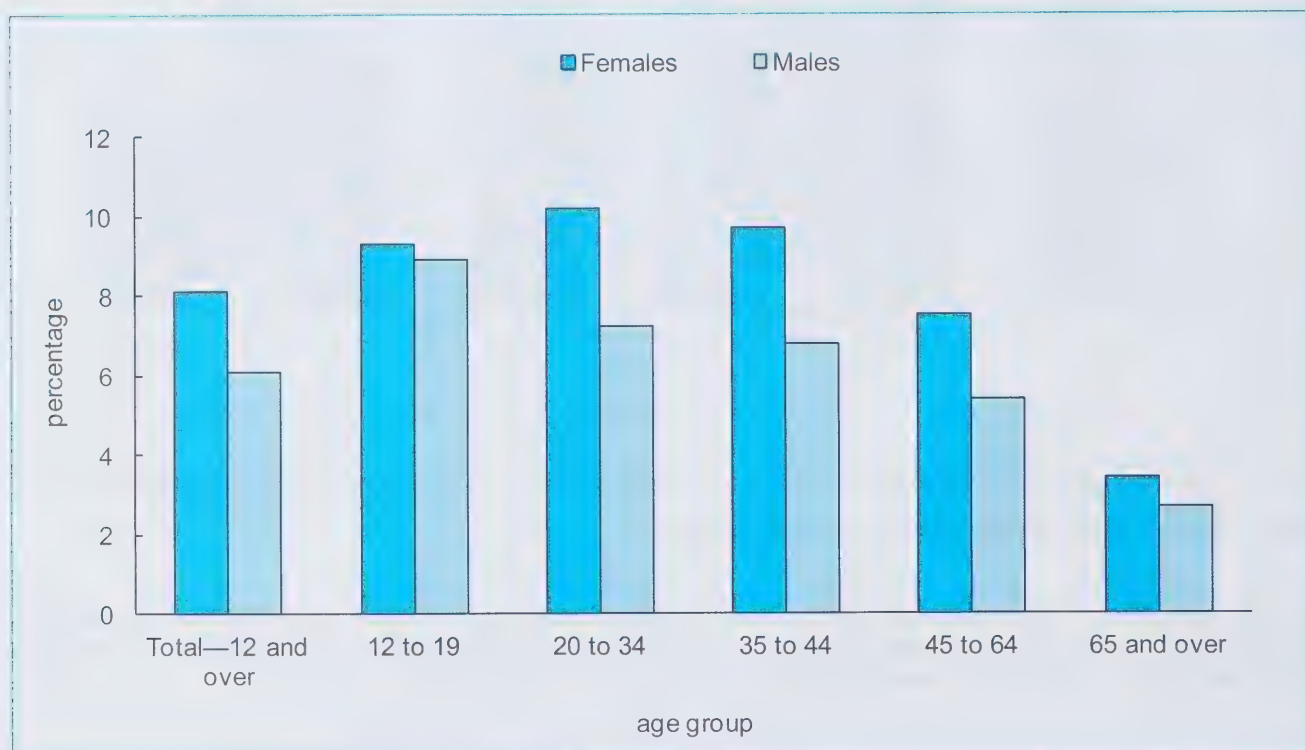
"Moderate" food insecurity occurs when the quality or quantity of food consumed shows signs of being compromised. "Severe" food insecurity results in indications of reduced food intake and disrupted eating patterns.

In 2007-2008, approximately 956,000 households (or 8% of Canadian households) experienced food insecurity. About 5% experienced moderate food insecurity and 3% experienced severe insecurity (results not shown).

Women (8%) were more likely than men (6%) to live in food-insecure households (Chart 3.12). This tendency was especially evident in the age groups from 20 to 64. The gap between women and men may be explained in part by the fact that women are more often at the head of lone-parent families, which have the highest incidences of food insecurity. In 2007-2008, 23% of women who were lone parents experienced food insecurity, compared with only 6% of women living with a spouse or partner and children (Chart 3.13). It was also found that women and men living alone (or without family ties with the members of their household) were proportionally more likely to experience food insecurity than those living in a couple.

Chart 3.12

Persons living in a food-insecure household, by age group, Canada, 2007/2008

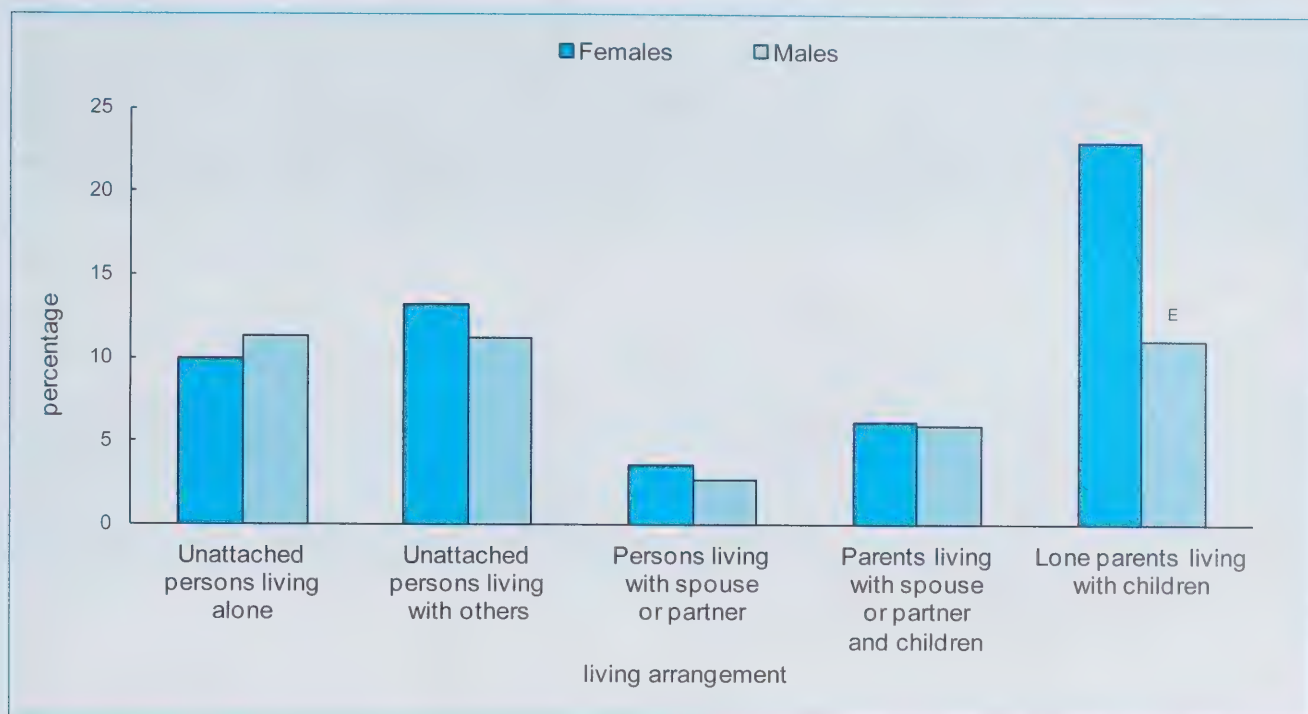


Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2007/2008.

70. Statistics Canada. 2010. "Household food insecurity, 2007-2008." *Health Fact Sheets*.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-625-x/2010001/article/11162-eng.htm> (accessed on January 4, 2011).

Chart 3.13

Persons aged 12 and over living in a food-insecure household, by living arrangement, Canada, 2007/2008



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2007/2008.

Contraception and sexual behaviours

In 2009, approximately two-thirds of persons between 15 and 24 years of age had ever had sexual intercourse, with a slightly smaller proportion for females (64%) than for males (68%) (Table 3.13). On average, females in this age group had had sexual intercourse for the first time a little later than males. Also, they were two times less likely than males to have had three or more different partners during the previous year (10% of sexually active females versus 21% of sexually active males).

Table 3.13

Contraception, sexually transmitted infections and sexual behaviours, by age group, Canada, 2009

Age group	Ever had sexual intercourse	Previously diagnosed with sexually transmitted infection ¹ percentage	Had three or more partners in past year ²	Average age at time of first sexual intercourse
15 to 24				
Females	64.3	6.5	9.7	16.6
Males	68.2	3.4	20.9	16.3
25 to 34				
Females	95.4	10.3	3.7	17.8
Males	95.9	5.6	10.2	17.4
35 to 49				
Females	98.5	8.8	1.7	18.6
Males	98.4	7.8	4.0	17.7

1. Among persons who ever had sexual intercourse.

2. Among persons who had sexual intercourse within the last 12 months.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Females aged 15 to 24 were twice as likely to report being diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease (7% compared with 3% of males). It is important to note that some persons may have been infected but not have been diagnosed and that these data refer to diagnosed cases only. In the 25-to-34 age group also, a higher proportion of females than males were diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection. However, this gap between females and males did not exist in the 35-to-49 age group.

According to other data sources, reported rates for chlamydia and gonorrhea increased steadily throughout the past decade, for both sexes and all age groups.⁷¹ According to these data, females are disproportionately affected by chlamydia. For example in 2008, the reported chlamydia rate for females was almost double the rate for males, and females under 30 years of age accounted for 87% of reported cases. As regards gonorrhea, the reported rates were lower for females than for males in the 25-and-over age group. However, in the 15-to-19 age group, gonorrhea infection rates were substantially higher for females than for males in 2008 (respectively 186.5 per 100,000 compared with 70.7 per 100,000 for males).

71. Public Health Agency of Canada. 2010. *Report on Sexually Transmitted Infections in Canada: 2008*. Community Acquired Infections Division – Centre for Communicable Diseases and Infection Control. Ottawa.
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/std-mts/report/sti-its2008/index-eng.php> (accessed September 8, 2011).

Teenage pregnancy

It has been established that teenage pregnancy can pose a health risk, both for the teen (risk of anemia, hypertension, renal disease, etc.) and for the child to be born (low birth weight and other associated health problems).⁷² For teenage mothers, the economic and social consequences of having had a child may follow them for many years, especially if they drop out of school to look after their baby.

Since the mid-1970s, teenage pregnancies have steadily decreased.⁷³ The most recent data show that this trend is continuing (Table 3.14). The total number of pregnancies includes those brought to term (live births), induced abortions and fetal loss. In 1990, there were 4.8 pregnancies per 1,000 teenage girls aged 14 and under; by 2005, this rate had fallen to 1.9 per 1,000. The pregnancy rate also declined substantially for girls aged 15 to 17, to the point where in 2005, there were only 15.8 pregnancies per 1,000 females in this age group (compared with 29.7 per 1,000 in 1990).

Table 3.14

Number of pregnancies and pregnancy rate among teenagers, Canada, 1990 to 2005

Year	Pregnancies			
	14 years and under		15 to 17 years	
	number	rate per 1,000 females	number	rate per 1,000 females
1990	889	4.8	16,354	29.7
1991	808	4.4	16,725	30.0
1992	898	4.9	17,154	30.6
1993	964	5.1	16,986	30.3
1994	864	4.5	17,322	30.6
1995	835	4.3	16,403	28.5
1996	799	4.1	16,110	27.3
1997	784	4.0	15,105	25.4
1998	692	3.5	14,860	24.8
1999	657	3.3	13,614	22.6
2000	559	2.8	13,030	21.4
2001	541	2.7	12,395	20.1
2002	470	2.4	11,144	18.1
2003	411	2.0	10,285	16.8
2004	424	2.0	10,359	16.9
2005	414	1.9	9,899	15.8

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Birth Database and Stillbirth Database; Canadian Institute for Health Information, Hospital Morbidity Database and Therapeutic Abortions Database. For years prior to 1994, the main data source is the Statistics Canada publication *Reproductive Health: Pregnancies and Rates, Canada, 1974-1993*. Catalogue no. 82-568-XPB.

72. Dryburgh, Heather. 2000. "Teenage pregnancy." *Health Reports*. Vol. 12, no. 1. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2000001/article/5299-eng.pdf>

73. Ibid.

Changes made to improve health

One of the main objectives of public health practitioners is to encourage people to changes lifestyles that are considered unhealthy. Not everyone is equally receptive to such messages. In general, women are more inclined than men to make changes to improve their health (or consider doing so). For example, in 2007-2008, 62% of women aged 45 to 64 reported that they had taken steps in the previous twelve months to improve their health. By comparison, only 53% of men reported doing so (Table 3.15).

Table 3.15

Persons who took steps to improve their health in the previous year, by age group, Canada, 2007/2008

Age group	All persons		Persons with fair or poor health		Obese persons	
	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
			percentage			
15 to 24	66.5	65.0	70.6	63.5	74.2	72.5
25 to 44	63.2	55.6	67.9	59.4	70.8	58.2
45 to 64	61.7	52.7	66.1	58.2	65.3	57.1
65 and over	45.5	43.8	45.9	46.7	49.8	46.4

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2007/2008.

People who are in good health and have healthy lifestyles do not necessarily need to make major changes. The situation is probably different for those whose health is fair or poor. Except for seniors, women who assessed their health as fair or poor were also more likely than men to have made changes in the previous year to improve their health (68% and 59% respectively for those aged 25 to 44). Obese women were also more likely than men to have made changes to improve their health.

Accessing and using health care services

Access to a regular medical doctor

In the past ten years, the percentage of persons who can count on the services of a regular medical doctor has edged down; it went from 86% in 2003 to 85% in 2009. Women are more likely to have a regular medical doctor than men. In 2009, 89% of the female population aged 12 and over did so, compared with 81% of the male population (Table 3.16). The largest gender gap in this regard was in the 20-to-34 age group, in which 81% of women had a regular medical doctor versus only 67% of men.

Table 3.16

Persons with access to a regular medical doctor, by age group, Canada, 2003 to 2009

Age group	2003		2005		2007		2009	
	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
	percentage							
Total—12 and over	89.9	81.8	89.5	81.9	89.2	80.4	88.7	80.9
12 to 19	86.4	85.0	86.0	84.3	84.7	84.7	85.7	84.0
20 to 34	83.3	69.0	83.4	69.4	82.3	65.1	81.4	66.9
35 to 44	90.7	78.5	89.4	78.4	89.5	78.1	88.5	76.1
45 to 64	92.9	87.4	92.2	87.3	92.6	85.7	91.4	86.8
65 and over	96.0	95.1	95.7	94.7	95.4	94.9	96.0	94.5

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009.

Based on information collected from people who have no regular medical doctor, it appears that women are more likely than men to try to find one. For example, among women aged 20 to 44 who had no regular medical doctor, 35% reported that they had not tried to contact one, compared with 58% of men in the same age group (Table 3.17). In general, women were more likely than men to state that there was no doctor in their area or that no doctors in their area were taking new patients.

Table 3.17

Reasons given for not having a regular medical doctor, by age group, Canada, 2009

Reason	20 to 44		45 to 64		65 and over	
	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
	percentage					
No medical doctors available in area	20.5	12.3	23.0	15.3	15.9 ^E	21.7 ^E
Medical doctors in area are not taking new patients	32.0	18.7	33.1	26.0	19.8	16.5
Have not tried to contact one	35.3	57.7	20.7	44.4	28.2	31.1 ^E
Had a medical doctor who left or retired	14.5	11.9	31.6	25.3	40.6	37.4
Other—Specify	12.6	9.7	16.0 ^E	7.9	11.2 ^E	12.3 ^E

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

There are sizable differences between regions regarding access to a regular medical doctor. In 2009, only 15% of women in Nunavut and 40% of those in the Northwest Territories reported having a regular medical doctor (Table 3.18). In Quebec, 81% of females aged 12 and over could count on the care of a regular medical doctor, compared with 94% in Ontario and 96% in Nova Scotia.

Table 3.18

Persons aged 12 and over with access to a regular medical doctor, by province or territory, 2009

Province or territory	Both sexes	Females percentage	Males
Newfoundland and Labrador	87.0	91.0	82.7
Prince Edward Island	91.1	91.9	90.2
Nova Scotia	92.8	96.1	89.2
New Brunswick	92.1	92.3	91.9
Quebec	73.3	80.5	65.9
Ontario	91.5	93.5	89.4
Manitoba	85.6	89.3	81.8
Saskatchewan	83.4	87.8	78.9
Alberta	80.6	86.0	75.3
British Columbia	86.8	89.4	84.1
Yukon	77.8	83.7	72.0
Northwest Territories	37.8	39.5	36.2
Nunavut—10 largest communities	11.8 ^E	15.2 ^E	F

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

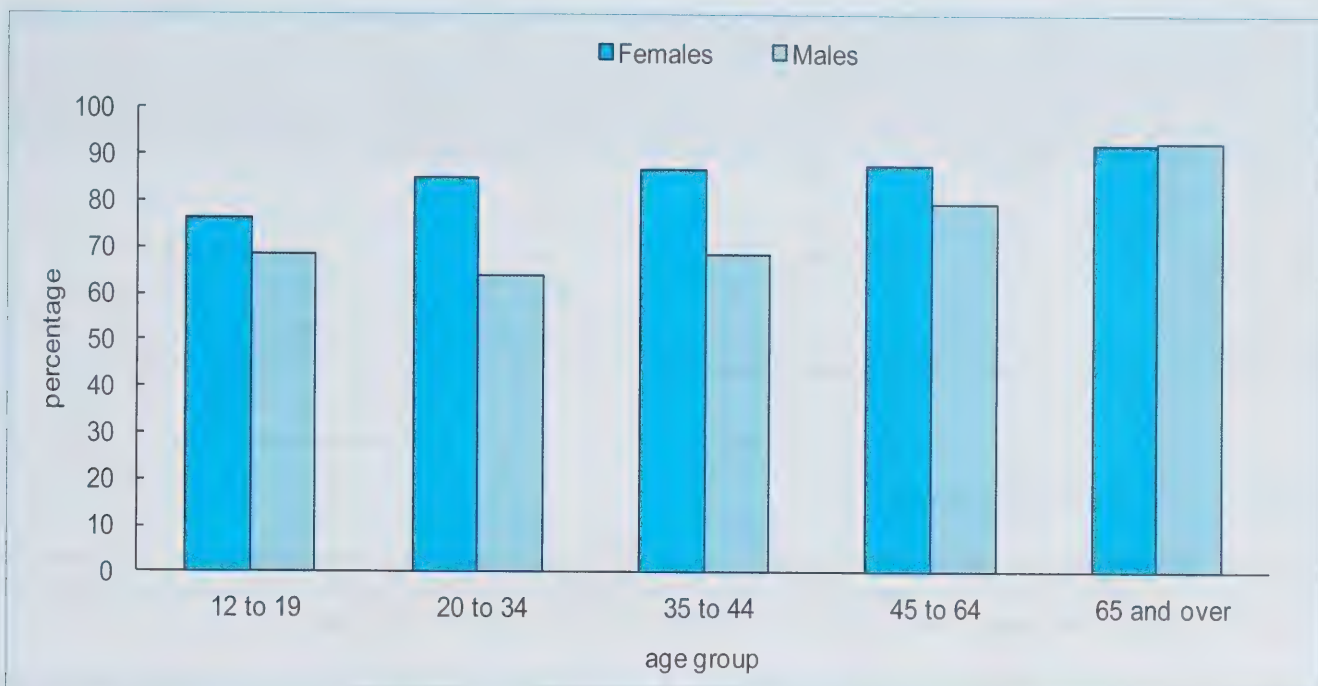
Contacts with a doctor and with various health professionals

Partly reflecting the fact that women were more likely to have access to a regular medical doctor, they were also more likely than men to have consulted a doctor in the previous year. In 2009, 86% of women and girls aged 12 and over had done so, compared with only 74% of men and boys.

Except for seniors, there was gender gap in all age groups with respect to consulting a doctor or other health professional, with the greatest difference among 20-to-34-year-olds (Chart 3.14). In that age group, 85% of women had consulted a doctor in the previous year, compared with 64% of men. Some women in this age group must consult a doctor to monitor their pregnancy.

Chart 3.14

Persons who saw or talked to a doctor in the previous year, by age group, Canada, 2009



Note: The term "doctor" includes family or general practitioners as well as specialists such as surgeons, allergists, orthopaedists, gynaecologists or psychiatrists. For the population aged 12 to 17, pediatricians are included.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Consulting certain health specialists may entail financial costs. Women with higher incomes can more easily have access to such services, especially because, with better salaries and benefits, they may also often count on an employer-provided insurance program.

In 2009, women whose household was in the lowest income quintile (the 20% with the lowest incomes) were much less likely to have gone to an eye specialist, dentist, orthodontist, chiropractor or physiotherapist. The gap was especially wide with regard to obtaining the services of a dentist. Of women aged 25 to 64 belonging to a household in the lowest income quintile, 48% had gone to a dentist, compared to 85% of those with household incomes in the highest quintile (Table 3.19).

Table 3.19

Consultation of various health care specialists according to household income, women aged 25 to 64, Canada, 2009

Income quintile	Eye specialist (ophthalmologist or optometrist)	Dentist or orthodontist	percentage	
			Chiropractor	Physiotherapist
Lower quintile	30.8	47.6	7.8	8.3
Second quintile	37.5	65.6	12.2	10.1
Third quintile	41.2	75.8	14.6	10.4
Fourth quintile	44.8	81.8	16.9	12.6
Upper quintile	47.6	85.3	16.3	14.2

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Update on mammography use

A recent Statistics Canada study looked at women's participation in mammography programs and its change over time.⁷⁴ In 2008, 72% of women aged 50 to 69 reported having had a mammogram in the past two years, up from 40% in 1990. The increase occurred from 1990 to 2000-2001; rates then stabilized.

Higher-income women were more likely to have had a mammogram. In 2008, 61% of women in the lowest income quintile had done so, compared with 79% of those in the highest quintile. However, the gap was greater twenty years ago. In 1990, only 33% of women in the lowest income quintile had had a mammogram, compared with 59% of those in the highest quintile.

The study showed that non-use of mammography programs was higher among women in British Columbia, Prince Edward Island and Nunavut. Non-use was associated with being an immigrant, living in a lower income household, not having a regular doctor and smoking.

Women and health occupations

Women are more highly represented than men in most health occupations. In 2006, 80% of all workers in health occupations were women. A large number of them were nurses, with women accounting for 94% of nursing professionals.

The new cohorts of women are increasingly well represented among physicians and dentists. In 2006, 54% of workers aged 25 to 34 in these occupations were women, compared with only 19% in the 55-to-64 age group (Box table 3.1). There was a similar age-based difference for optometrists, chiropractors and other health diagnosing and treating professionals. Whereas among older workers, men overwhelmingly dominate these occupations, women are the majority among the youngest, aged 25 to 34.

74. Shields, Margot and Kathryn Wilkins. 2009. "An update on mammography use in Canada." *Health Reports*. Vol. 20, no. 3. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2009003/article/10873-eng.htm>

Box table 3.1

Women in different health occupations, by age group, Canada, 2006

Women within the occupational group	All age groups — 15 and over	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64
	number				
Total—Health occupations	950,360	211,985	256,580	264,825	127,170
Professional occupations in health	192,155	48,980	54,170	48,650	26,910
Physicians and dentists	94,315	18,200	24,890	25,960	16,765
Veterinarians	7,900	1,850	2,460	2,165	1,210
Optometrists, chiropractors and other health diagnosing and treating professionals	13,565	4,005	4,245	3,095	1,630
Pharmacists, dietitians and nutritionists	34,930	10,045	9,830	8,855	4,030
Therapy and assessment professionals	41,450	14,885	12,745	8,570	3,275
Nurse supervisors and registered nurses	279,725	53,270	74,610	89,515	46,385
Technical and related occupations in health	219,380	55,740	61,430	57,620	23,055
Medical technologists and technicians (except dental health)	86,430	21,480	23,915	22,630	8,685
Technical occupations in dental care	26,850	7,330	9,265	6,315	1,725
Other technical occupations in health care (except dental)	106,105	26,930	28,250	28,670	12,645
Assisting occupations in support of health services	259,095	53,995	66,370	69,050	30,815
Women within the occupational group	percentage				
Total—Health occupations	80.1	82.1	80.1	80.9	76.9
Professional occupations in health	53.5	68.7	58.9	49.3	32.7
Physicians and dentists	35.4	53.8	43.3	32.5	18.6
Veterinarians	50.3	71.4	57.7	42.0	18.6
Optometrists, chiropractors and other health diagnosing and treating professionals	43.4	54.3	44.5	39.3	27.0
Pharmacists, dietitians and nutritionists	68.3	74.9	70.8	68.3	52.5
Therapy and assessment professionals	86.2	86.4	85.1	86.2	88.4
Nurse supervisors and registered nurses	93.7	91.8	92.5	94.6	95.5
Technical and related occupations in health	77.4	78.9	75.6	78.2	75.9
Medical technologists and technicians (except dental health)	81.2	82.7	78.4	83.0	78.4
Technical occupations in dental care	77.1	86.8	80.2	71.2	49.6
Other technical occupations in health care (except dental)	74.5	73.7	71.8	76.0	77.9
Assisting occupations in support of health services	87.6	87.8	87.5	87.7	88.2

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Life expectancy

In Canada, life expectancy at birth reached 80.7 years during the three-year period from 2005 to 2007 (Table 3.20). This marked an increase compared with the average of 80.5 years registered from 2004 to 2006 and the 78.4 years registered ten years earlier, from 1995 to 1997.

Even though women have a higher life expectancy, men made the greatest gains in the last decade. Their life expectancy at birth rose 2.9 years to 78.3 years from 2005 to 2007, while for women, it increased by 1.8 years to 83.0. The gap between the sexes has been narrowing for a number of years.

The life expectancy of persons aged 65 and over has also followed an upward trend for some time. During the 2005 to 2007 period, a 65-year-old woman could expect to live another 21.3 years on average, an increase of 1.3 years compared with a decade earlier. A 65-year-old man could expect to live another 18.1 years, an increase of 2.0 years.

Table 3.20

Life expectancy at birth and at age 65, Canada, 1995 to 2007

Period	At birth			At age 65		
	Both sexes	Females	Males	Both sexes	Females	Males
life expectancy in years						
1995 to 1997	78.4	81.2	75.4	18.2	20.0	16.1
1996 to 1998	78.6	81.3	75.7	18.2	20.0	16.2
1997 to 1999	78.8	81.5	76.0	18.3	20.1	16.3
1998 to 2000	79.0	81.7	76.3	18.5	20.2	16.5
1999 to 2001	79.3	81.9	76.6	18.7	20.4	16.8
2000 to 2002	79.6	82.0	77.0	18.9	20.5	17.0
2001 to 2003	79.8	82.2	77.2	19.1	20.6	17.2
2002 to 2004	80.0	82.3	77.5	19.2	20.8	17.4
2003 to 2005	80.2	82.5	77.7	19.4	20.9	17.6
2004 to 2006	80.5	82.8	78.0	19.7	21.1	17.9
2005 to 2007	80.7	83.0	78.3	19.8	21.3	18.1

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Birth Database, Death Database and Estimates of the Population, 1995 to 1997 from 2005 to 2007.

The life expectancy gap between women and men narrows when one introduces the concept of quality of life. Health-adjusted life expectancy is the number of years that a person can expect to spend in good health, given current morbidity and mortality conditions. According to the most recent estimates available, namely those for 2001, women could expect to spend 70.8 years in good health, compared with 68.3 years for men.⁷⁵

75. Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 102-0121. <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a05?lang=eng&id=1020121>.

Causes of death

According to the most recent estimates, malignant neoplasms (cancers) continue to be the main cause of death, for both women and men. For women, the only age group for which malignant neoplasms are not the main cause of death is the 85 and over group (at these ages, death is more often caused by heart disease) (Table 3.21).

Reflecting their higher life expectancy, women's death rates are generally lower than men's in all age groups.

Table 3.21
Mortality rates for the 10 main causes of death, by age group, Canada, 2006

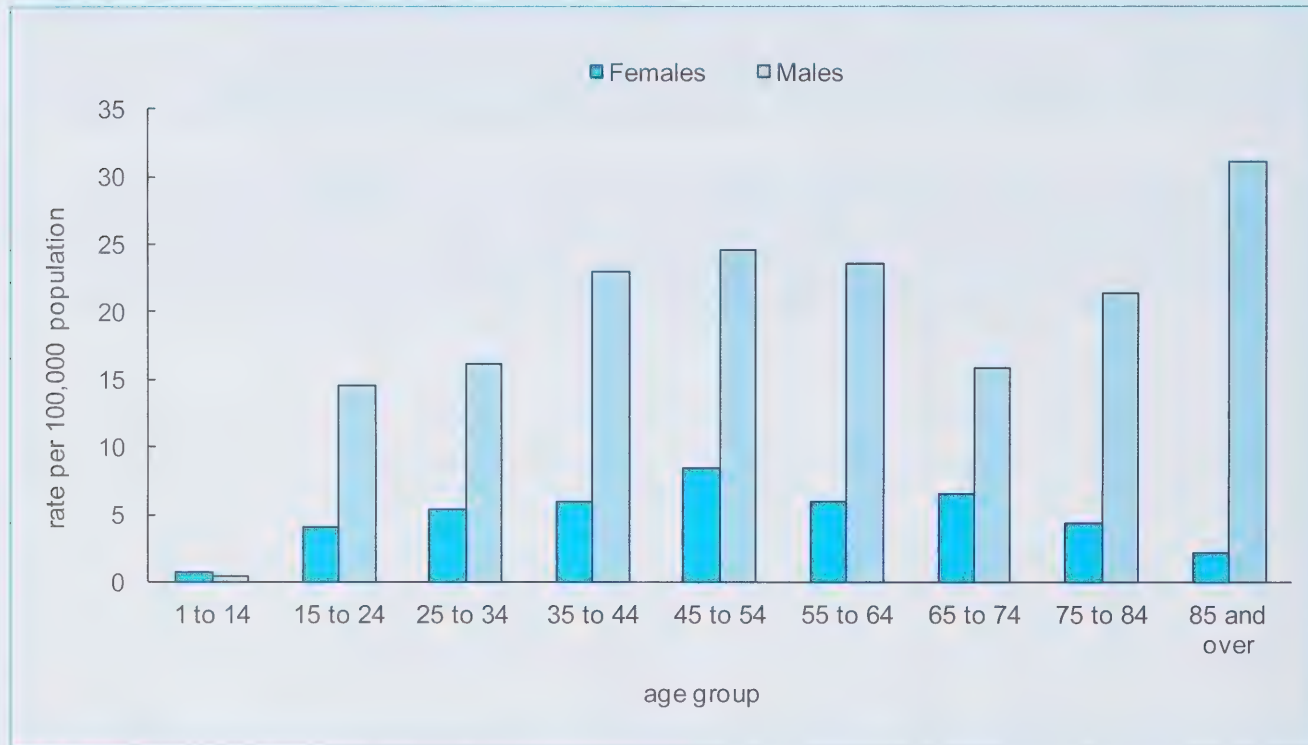
Age group	Total— all causes of death	Malignant neoplasms	Heart diseases	Other causes of death	Cerebro- vascular diseases	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	Alzheimer's disease	Accidents (unintentional injuries)	Diabetes mellitus	Influenza and pneumonia	Nephritis, nephro- tic syndrome and nephrosis
mortality rate per 100,000 population											
Females											
Total— All age groups	685.3	195.3	144.8	114.3	49.1	28.3	24.2	23.6	21.2	17.2	11.1
1 to 14	12.5	1.9	0.5	3.5	0.2	0.0	0.0	2.7	0.0	0.3	0.0
15 to 24	30.1	2.6	0.8	6.1	0.3	0.2	0.0	12.7	0.2	0.3	0.1
25 to 34	37.2	6.8	2.4	7.2	0.5	0.5	0.0	7.8	0.4	0.4	0.3
35 to 44	86.1	32.0	6.3	16.8	2.5	0.6	0.0	9.5	1.4	1.1	0.6
45 to 54	217.4	114.2	18.2	31.1	6.7	2.5	0.3	11.4	3.9	2.7	1.0
55 to 64	504.2	284.0	54.6	59.9	15.6	16.4	1.8	13.8	14.1	4.4	3.4
65 to 74	1,325.4	631.0	205.0	152.5	61.1	70.7	16.3	25.7	47.4	14.4	17.6
75 to 84	3,734.7	1,100.4	816.3	558.0	293.4	196.8	135.9	89.0	136.2	78.1	66.9
85 and over	12,349.2	1,582.6	3,461.6	2,576.4	1,169.4	465.6	710.2	410.1	363.5	490.0	254.0
Males											
Total— All age groups	712.1	220.3	161.0	89.9	35.4	31.7	10.4	35.6	23.3	14.3	11.5
1 to 14	16.0	2.7	0.5	4.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.1	0.3	0.1
15 to 24	72.8	4.5	1.7	11.2	0.5	0.2	0.0	31.7	0.4	0.4	0.1
25 to 34	81.9	8.3	5.0	12.1	0.8	0.3	0.0	28.8	1.1	0.8	0.2
35 to 44	142.1	22.3	19.0	25.8	2.4	0.6	0.0	28.4	2.5	1.6	0.5
45 to 54	338.0	103.6	69.4	48.0	6.9	2.9	0.1	31.6	8.6	3.5	1.9
55 to 64	819.4	347.5	182.5	84.8	23.6	17.7	1.5	33.2	29.4	6.9	7.0
65 to 74	2,099.7	886.3	467.7	208.5	88.0	87.9	16.0	46.5	75.7	23.7	28.2
75 to 84	5,571.9	1,779.6	1,314.0	659.4	347.6	344.3	107.1	128.9	215.1	117.9	108.0
85 and over	15,171.8	2,930.4	4,177.8	2,358.2	1,125.5	945.1	482.0	476.5	446.7	618.5	402.2

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Birth Database, Death Database and Estimates of the Population, 2006.

According to the World Health Organization, the number of suicide attempts is ten to twenty times higher than the number of suicide deaths.⁷⁶ While it is hard to accurately estimate the actual number of attempts over the course of a year, the available data tend to show that women are more likely than men to be hospitalized after a suicide attempt. A Statistics Canada study showed that in 1998-1999, the hospitalization rate for suicide attempts was 108 per 100,000 for females aged 10 and over and 70 per 100,000 for males in the same age range.⁷⁷

Statistics on suicide deaths show that males are more likely to commit suicide (Chart 3.15). In the 35 to 44 age group, the suicide rate was 23.0 per 100,000 for males, compared with 6.0 per 100,000 for females.

Chart 3.15
Suicide rate by age group, Canada, 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Birth Database, Death Database and Estimates of the Population, 2006.

76. World Health Organization. 2004. "Suicide huge but preventable public health problem." *News release*.

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2004/pr61/en/index.html> (accessed on January 6, 2011).

77. Langlois, Stéphanie and Peter Morrison. 2002. "Suicide deaths and suicide attempts." *Health Reports*. Vol. 13, no. 2. January. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003, pp. 9-22. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2001002/article/6060-eng.pdf>

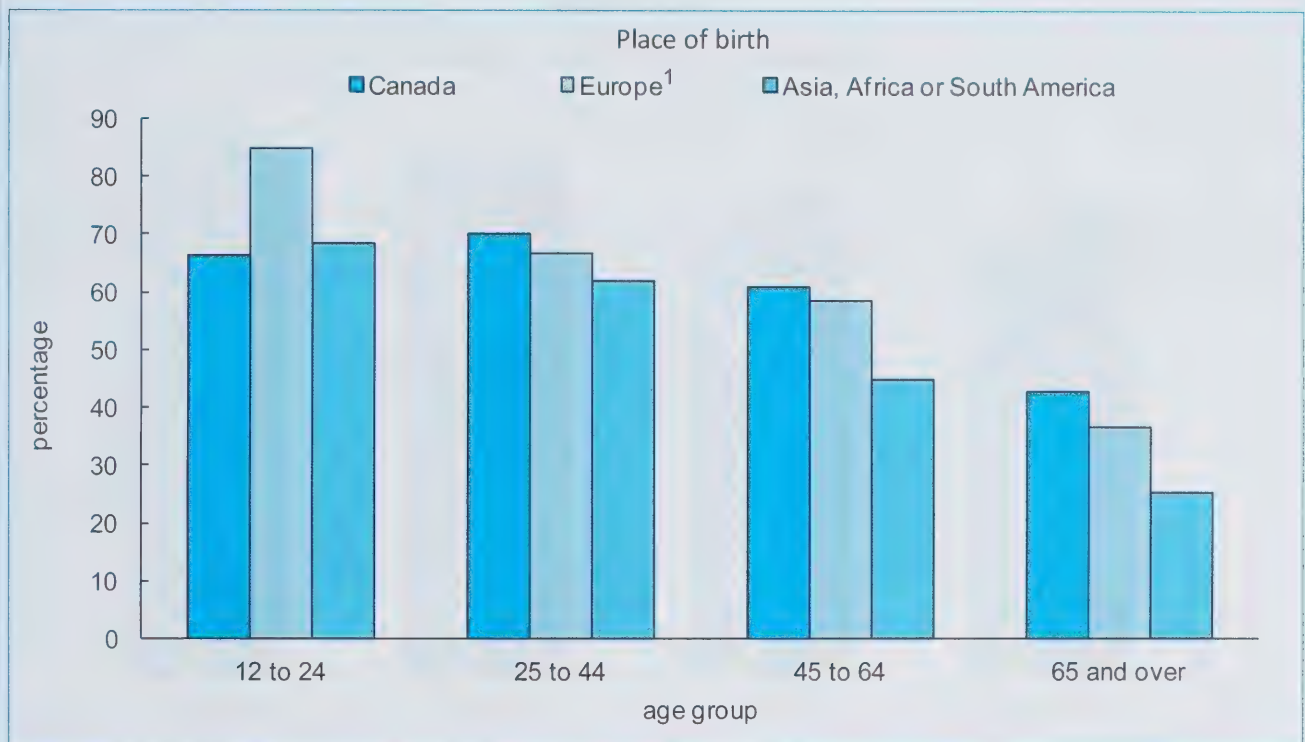
The health of women born abroad

Perceived health

In 2009, the perceived health of women born in Asia, Africa or South America was substantially less positive than that of women born in Canada or in a European country. In the 45-to-64 age group, 45% of women born in Asia, Africa or South America reported very good or excellent health, compared with 61% of Canadian-born women (Box Chart 3.1).

Box Chart 3.1

Percentage of females reporting very good or excellent health, by place of birth and age group, 2009



1. Includes Europe, Other North America (including Mexico) and Oceania (Australia, Fiji, New Zealand).

Note: The category "Canada" includes females born outside Canada but with Canadian citizenship.

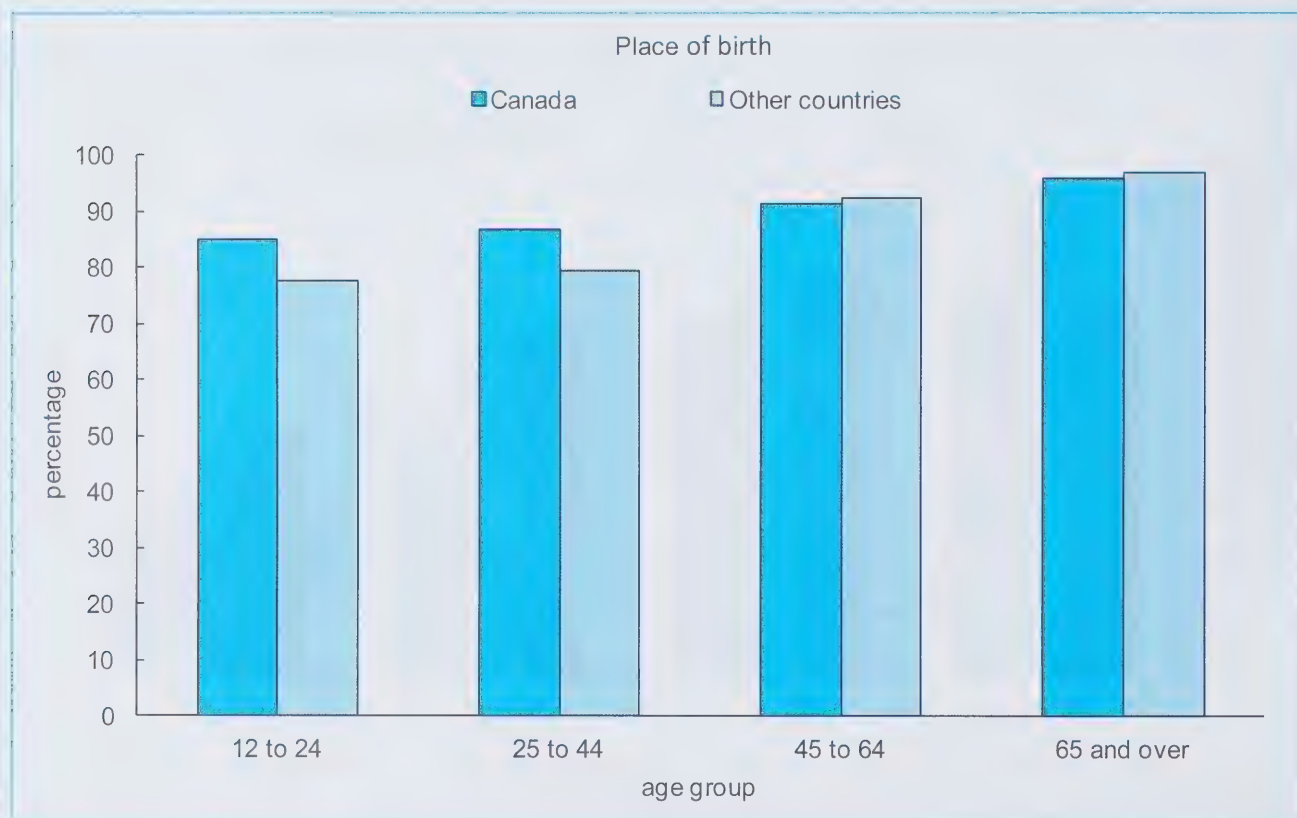
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Access to a regular medical doctor

One of the challenges for persons who were born abroad is finding a regular medical doctor. In 2009, a smaller proportion of females aged 12 to 24 who were born abroad than females born in Canada had access to a regular medical doctor (78% and 85% respectively) (Box Chart 3.2). A similar gap was noted in the 25-to-44 age group. However, in the 45-and-over age group, there was little difference between women born in Canada and those born abroad in terms of access to a regular medical doctor.

Box Chart 3.2

Percentage of females with access to a regular medical doctor, by place of birth and age group, 2009



Note: The category "Canada" includes females born outside Canada but with Canadian citizenship.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Chapter 4

Women and Education

by Martin Turcotte

Women have progressed considerably in terms of education and schooling over the past few decades. Just 20 years ago, a smaller percentage of women than men aged 25 to 54 had a postsecondary education. Today, the situation is completely different. Education indicators show that women generally do better than men. This gap in favour of women is even noticeable at a young age, since girls often get better marks than boys in elementary and secondary school.

As well, more girls than boys earn their high school diploma within the expected timeframe and girls are less likely to drop out. More women than men enrol in college and university programs after completing their high school education. A greater percentage of women leave these programs with a diploma or degree. Despite all that, certain challenges persist: women's employment earnings are on average still lower than men's, even when they have the same education level (see the chapter on the economic well-being of women).

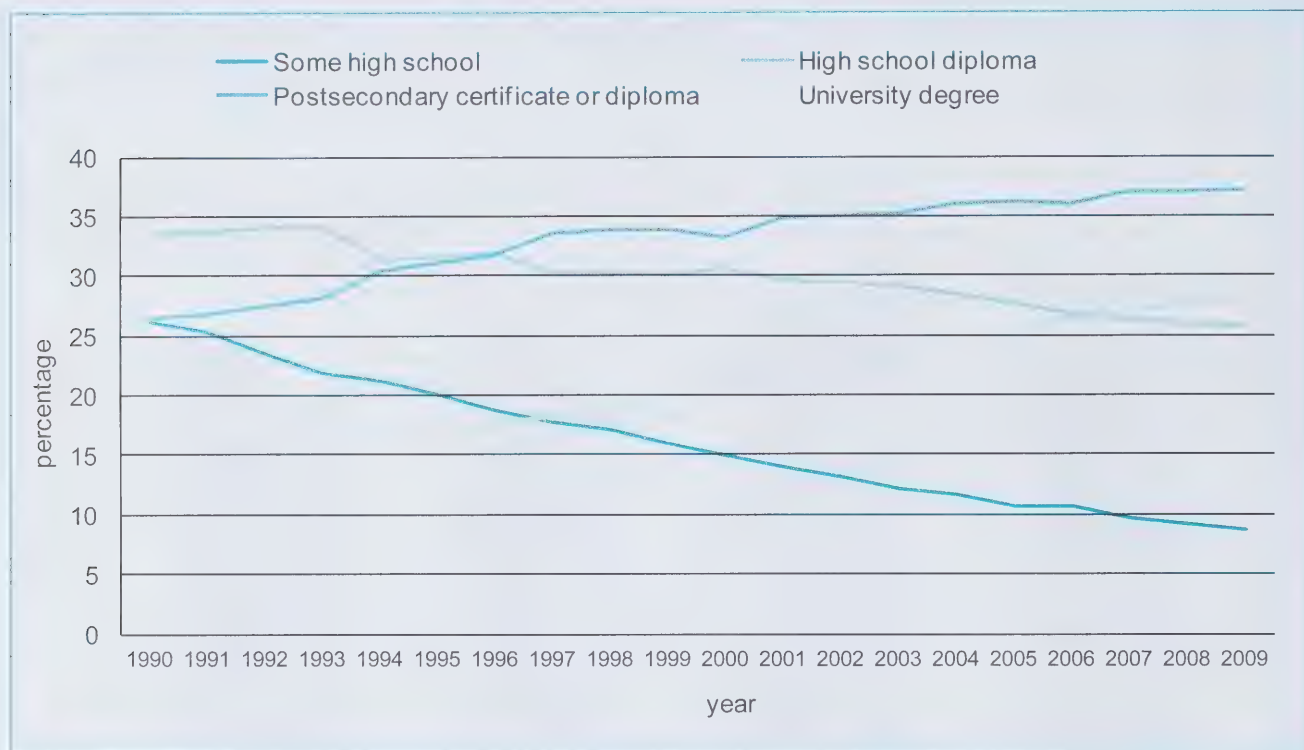
In this chapter, we will examine various education indicators. First we will present a general profile of women's education, showing how the situation of women changed over time compared to that of men. Then we will look at more detailed data on different steps along the pathway from elementary and secondary school to university.

Evolution of schooling from 1990 to 2009

In 1990, about one-quarter of women aged 25 to 54 had not earned a high school diploma and only 14% of them had a university degree (Chart 4.1).

Chart 4.1

Distribution of women aged 25 to 54, by highest level of educational attainment, Canada, 1990 to 2009



Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1990 to 2009.

Two decades later, the situation had completely changed. The proportion of women aged 25 to 54 with a bachelor or postgraduate university degree had more than doubled, reaching 28% in 2009. The proportion of women who had not completed high school dropped considerably, from 26% in 1990 to 9% in 2009 (Chart 4.1). The proportion of men who had not completed high school had dropped as well. However, their participation rate in university education had not increased as quickly as that of women. As a result, a smaller proportion of men than women had a university degree in 2009, the opposite of the situation in 1990 (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1

Distribution of women and men, by age group and highest level of educational attainment, Canada, 1990 and 2009

Highest level of educational attainment	25 to 34				25 to 54			
	1990		2009		1990		2009	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	percentage							
0 to 8 years	3.9	4.6	1.4	1.5	8.6	9.0	2.2	2.7
Some high school	15.5	17.9	5.2	8.0	17.5	18.0	6.6	9.2
High school diploma	27.3	23.0	15.0	19.3	25.4	20.0	19.4	19.7
Some postsecondary	9.9	9.7	7.4	8.2	8.2	8.1	6.3	6.5
Postsecondary certificate/diploma	28.3	29.3	36.7	37.0	26.6	27.8	37.2	36.8
University degree	15.0	15.6	34.3	26.0	13.7	17.1	28.1	25.1
	thousands							
Total population	2,466	2,469	2,265	2,280	6,016	6,014	7,262	7,256

Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1990 and 2009.

Reflecting the fact that more women than men are now in university, the gender-based differences were even more pronounced among young adults. In 2009, 34% of women aged 25 to 34 had at least a bachelor's degree, compared to 26% of men (Table 4.1).

Provincial variations in level of educational attainment

In all provinces, most women aged 25 to 54 had completed at least high school (Table 4.2). This proportion reached a peak in British Columbia and Ontario where, respectively, 93% and 92% of women had at least a high school diploma. Even though the difference with the other provinces was relatively low, it is in Newfoundland and Labrador (86%) and Quebec (89%) that women in this age group were less likely to have earned their high school diploma.

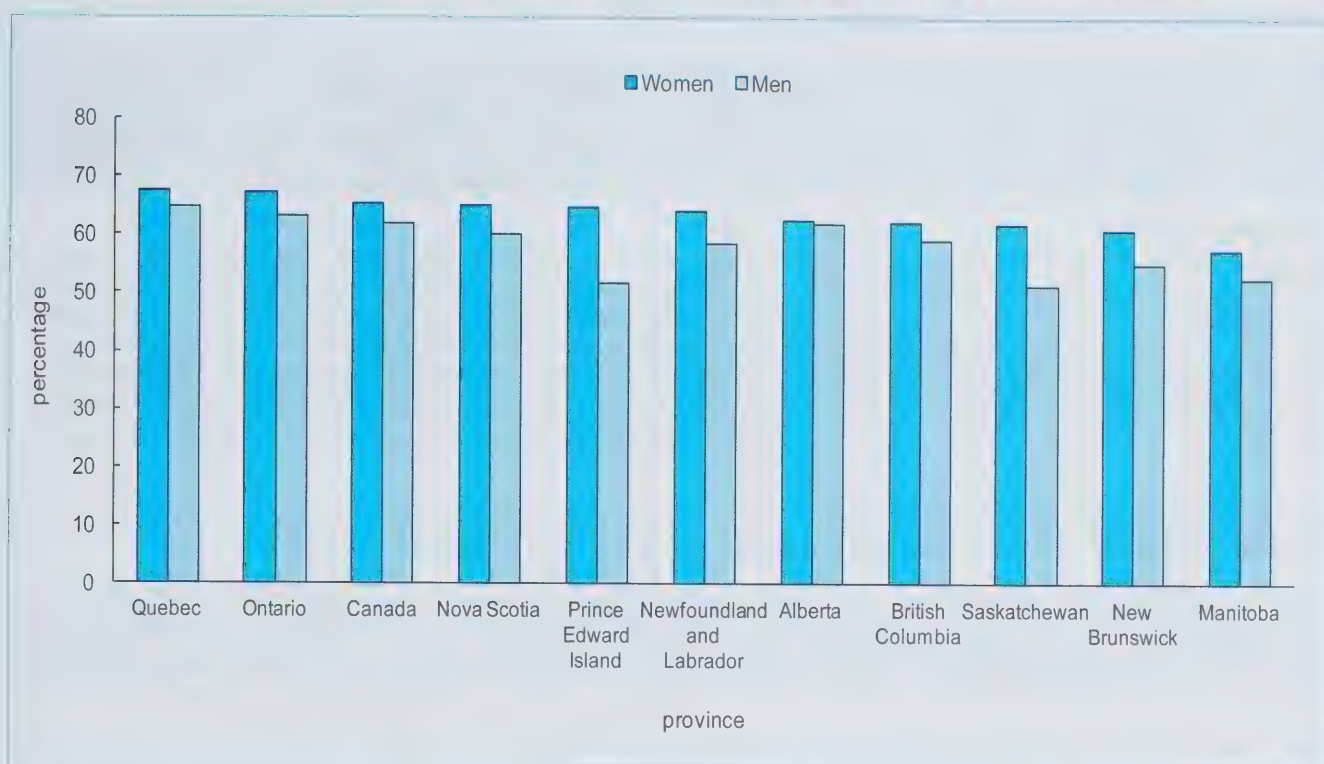
Table 4.2

Distribution of women and men aged 25 to 54, by province and highest level of educational attainment, 2009

Province	0 to 8 years		Some high school		High school diploma		Some postsecondary		Postsecondary certificate or diploma		University degree	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	percentage											
Canada	2.2	2.7	6.6	9.2	19.4	19.7	6.3	6.5	37.2	36.8	28.1	25.1
Newfoundland and Labrador	4.2	6.2	10.2	11.0	16.9	17.5	4.6	6.6	44.4	43.6	19.7	15.0
Prince Edward Island	1.7	5.4	8.5	14.8	18.7	21.3	6.5	7.2	41.8	35.4	22.8	16.2
Nova Scotia	1.6	3.6	9.0	12.7	17.8	17.0	6.4	6.4	40.0	39.2	25.2	21.0
New Brunswick	2.9	5.5	7.0	9.9	22.0	22.8	7.3	6.5	38.9	37.7	22.0	17.6
Quebec	3.1	4.2	8.4	10.8	15.8	14.8	5.4	5.5	41.4	41.9	26.0	22.8
Ontario	2.0	2.1	5.7	7.8	19.7	20.6	5.4	6.2	36.3	34.8	30.9	28.5
Manitoba	2.9	2.9	7.6	12.6	23.0	22.6	8.8	9.4	33.4	32.8	24.3	19.8
Saskatchewan	1.3	2.1	5.6	11.4	23.5	27.6	7.4	7.2	39.1	34.1	23.0	17.4
Alberta	1.4	1.8	7.3	9.3	21.7	20.6	7.1	6.2	35.9	38.5	26.8	23.6
British Columbia	1.6	1.6	5.0	7.7	21.7	22.6	9.4	9.0	32.8	32.5	29.5	26.7

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2009.

The differences between provinces were somewhat more pronounced when looking at the proportion of people completing postsecondary studies. Women in Quebec and Ontario were most likely to have earned a postsecondary degree (Chart 4.2). Yet this was also the case for men in these two provinces. In Quebec, students who want to go to university must earn a CEGEP (college) diploma; this requirement has an impact on postsecondary education completion rates.

Chart 4.2**Percentage of women and men with a postsecondary degree, by province, 2009**

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2009.

As well, the difference between women and men varied noticeably from one region to another. For example, in Alberta, a very similar proportion of women and men aged 25 to 54 had completed high school (63% and 62%, respectively). In Prince Edward Island, the proportions were 65% of women and 52% of men.

At the university level, Ontario had the highest proportion of graduates among women aged 25 to 54 in 2009, namely 31% (Table 4.2). In Newfoundland and Labrador, this proportion was 20%. It should be noted that university graduates living in a given region were not necessarily born there. In fact, some regions of the country can attract university graduates born elsewhere or who received their education in another region or province.

Elementary and secondary school

Recent studies have demonstrated that, during their first years at school and even earlier, young girls do better than boys (see text box). At age 15, slight differences between boys and girls are also noticeable in the test results measuring various skills. Although girls do better than boys in reading, they do slightly less well in mathematics (Table 4.3).

We also see the same types of gaps within the adult population. In fact, in 2003, the last year for which data on the adult population are available, women aged 16 to 65 did better than men in comprehension and interpretation of prose (Table 4.4). Thus, 40% of women were at the low level of competence in reading, compared with 44% of men (namely 4,227,800 women aged 16 to 65 at the low level of competence versus 4,698,600 men in the same age group). However, women did not fare as well as men did in numeracy.

Table 4.3

Test results of 15-year-old girls and boys in the Program for International Student Assessment, Canada, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2009

Field of study	2000		2003		2006		2009	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
	average result							
Sciences – Overall	531	529	516	527	532	536	526	531
Reading	551	519	546	514	543	511	542	507
Mathematics	529	539	530	541	520	534	521	533

Note: The results represent boys' and girls' averages on a scale where the average is 500 points for the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. This way, the results of the different countries can be compared with each other and to the average for all the countries.

Sources: Program for International Student Assessment, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2009.

Table 4.4

Literacy results, women and men aged 16 to 65 years, Canada, 2003

Literacy	Women	Men
	average result	
Prose scale	284	278
Document literacy	279	282
Numeracy	265	280
Problem resolution scale	274	273

Note: The results represent the averages on a scale of 0 to 500.

Source: Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, 2003.

These differences between women and men may indicate different gender-based preferences and interests. Also, "differences in occupational choices, course enrolment and training can lead to differing pathways over the lifespan that influence the development and maintenance of skills in specific domains".⁷⁸

78. Statistics Canada and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2005. *Learning a Living: First Results of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey*.

Girls aged 5 and 9: Readiness to learn and elementary school results

Readiness to learn at age 5

In 2006, Statistics Canada presented the results of an extensive study to determine how ready 5-year-olds were to learn when starting elementary school.⁷⁹ They compared boys and girls on 11 measurements, including language and communication skills, academic skills, self-regulation of learning, self-control of behaviour as well as social competence and independence.

In general, the study found that 5-year-old girls exceeded boys of the same age in terms of readiness to learn. Girls scored higher than boys in communication skills, attention, self-control of behaviour and independence in dressing. However, boys ranked higher than girls with respect to curiosity.

For example, the average score of 5-year-olds for independence in dressing was 82. Girls on average scored 87 and boys 78. For the attention rating, girls got 9.3, compared with 8.5 for boys. In terms of curiosity, the study found that 67% of boys often showed curiosity, versus 48% of girls.

Despite these differences, the study showed that girls and boys begin school with equivalent skills in several areas (vocabulary understood by the child, work effort, co-operative play and independence in cleanliness).

Nine-year-olds at school

Another study by Statistics Canada, measuring the outcomes of 9-year-olds during their transition from primary to junior grades, was published in 2009.⁸⁰ One of the reasons for looking at the school outcomes of children at this particular age is that "between the primary and junior levels the academic program changes from one focused on developing basic literacy, numeracy and other skills to a subject-based curriculum which assumes that these skills are in place"⁸¹. Students who have not acquired these skills before the start of the junior years may experience academic difficulties later on.

The study showed that 9-year-old girls and boys were no different in terms of success in mathematics in Grades 3 or 4. However, girls did better than boys when it came to attention. In general, girls were more likely to perform better in reading and written work. On a scale of 0 to 10 measuring attention, girls scored on average 7.5 and boys, 6.7.

When parents were asked how they would assess their 9-year-old's academic performance, 80% of them felt that their daughter did well or very well, compared with 69% for the boys. The difference between boys and girls was especially significant in written work: 71% of parents stated that their daughter had good or very good performance. In comparison, only 54% of parents felt that their son did well in their written work.

Since they generally experienced fewer difficulties, girls (19%) were less likely than boys (24%) to receive tutoring or extra help to overcome academic difficulties.

79. Statistics Canada. 2006. "Study: Readiness to learn at school among five-year-old children, 2002/2003," *The Daily*, November 27, 2006.

80. Statistics Canada. 2009. "Study: Canadian nine-year-olds at school, 2006/2007," *The Daily*, September 25, 2009.

81. Thomas, Eleanor M. 2009. "Canadian Nine-year-olds at School", Research paper — Children and Youth Research Paper Series, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 89-599.

High school graduation and dropping out

A larger proportion of girls than boys earn their high school diploma within the expected timeframe. In 2006, 84% of 19-year-old women had a high school diploma, compared with 77% of men in the same age group (Table 4.5).⁸² There was a smaller difference for 25-year-olds. In 2006, 90% of women and 86% of men aged 25 had a high school diploma.

Table 4.5

Percentage of people who earned a high school diploma, by age and province or territory, 2006

Province or territory	18 years		19 years		20 years		25 years	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	percentage							
Canada	65.8	58.3	84.0	77.4	86.5	81.2	90.2	86.1
Newfoundland and Labrador	60.0	51.1	83.1	75.6	80.7	79.1	88.0	82.7
Prince Edward Island	70.2	52.3	87.5	80.8	89.6	78.2	92.4	83.2
Nova Scotia	54.8	44.4	84.6	76.8	88.6	81.4	90.4	85.1
New Brunswick	60.6	51.7	86.7	77.9	89.0	83.4	91.1	85.1
Quebec	79.0	68.0	83.6	75.0	86.4	77.8	90.1	84.6
Ontario	62.9	55.2	84.8	77.8	88.3	83.3	92.0	88.9
Manitoba	55.3	48.2	77.9	72.4	78.3	73.8	83.7	79.1
Saskatchewan	50.5	44.2	75.5	71.6	78.9	77.0	84.8	81.4
Alberta	61.8	59.0	82.1	77.5	81.8	79.1	86.2	82.9
British Columbia	68.1	64.1	88.6	84.4	90.6	86.8	92.5	88.6
Yukon Territory	63.1	48.2	74.4	76.3	91.8	83.1	79.2	87.0
Northwest Territories	41.3	28.3	61.8	53.8	60.5	55.2	73.2	75.8
Nunavut	14.6	13.6	22.7	21.7	27.4	21.3	52.0	47.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

People who drop out of high school might try and earn their diploma later by returning to school as an adult. One way to measure the drop-out rate is to consider a dropout to be a 20- to 24-year-old who has not finished high school and is not currently going to school.⁸³

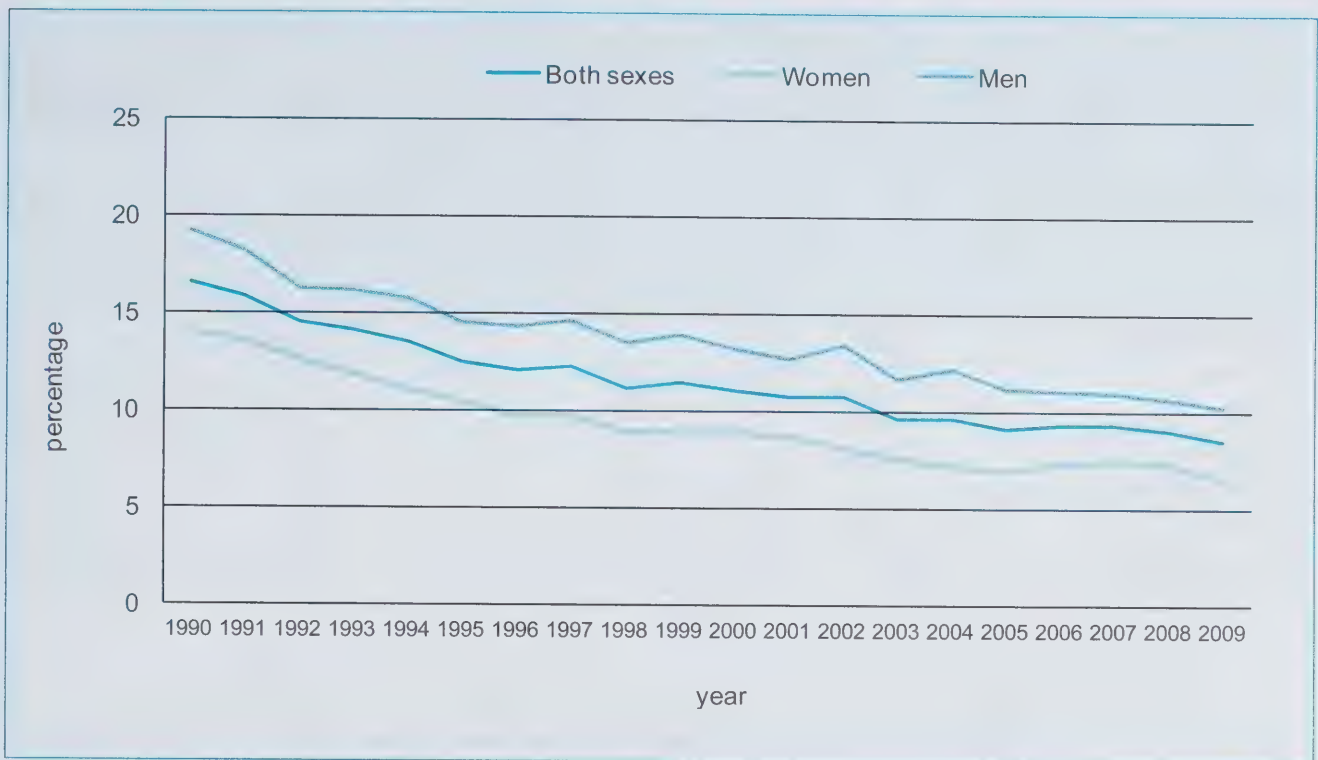
In the last 20 years, dropout rates have been decreasing among women and men (Chart 4.3). In 1990, the dropout rate was 14% for women aged 20 to 24 and 19% for men of the same age group. In 2009, about 7% of women and 10% of men were dropouts, in other words, they were not attending school and did not have a high school diploma.

82. Even with provincial differences between school systems, a person who has not failed a year should have a high school diploma by age 19.

83. These rates are calculated by looking at school attendance during the months of the school year, namely September to April.

Chart 4.3

Dropout rates of women and men aged 20 to 24, Canada, 1990 to 2009



Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1990 to 2009.

According to a Statistics Canada study, the prevailing reasons for dropping out are school-related for both boys and girls.⁸⁴ However, other factors also played a considerable role and the study showed that reasons for dropping out vary by gender. Among certain young men, the desire to work was an important factor, whereas pregnancy and caring for children were reasons mentioned by a number of young women. In general, girls exhibit a higher level of commitment to school than boys (interest in learning, respect for rules and obligations), which helps explain why they are less likely to drop out than their male counterparts.⁸⁵

At the provincial level, Newfoundland and Labrador and New Brunswick have shown the most progress (Table 4.6). In these two provinces, dropout rates for women in 1990 exceeded 15% and were among the highest in the country. In 2009, these rates were among the lowest (about 5% in both provinces).

84. Statistics Canada. 2002. *In and out of High School: First Results from the Second Cycle of the Youth in Transition Survey*, Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics, Catalogue no. 81-595-MIE2004014, research paper.

85. Statistics Canada. 2002. *At a Crossroads: First Results for the 18 to 20-year-old Cohort of the Youth in Transition Survey*, Catalogue no. 81-591-XIE.

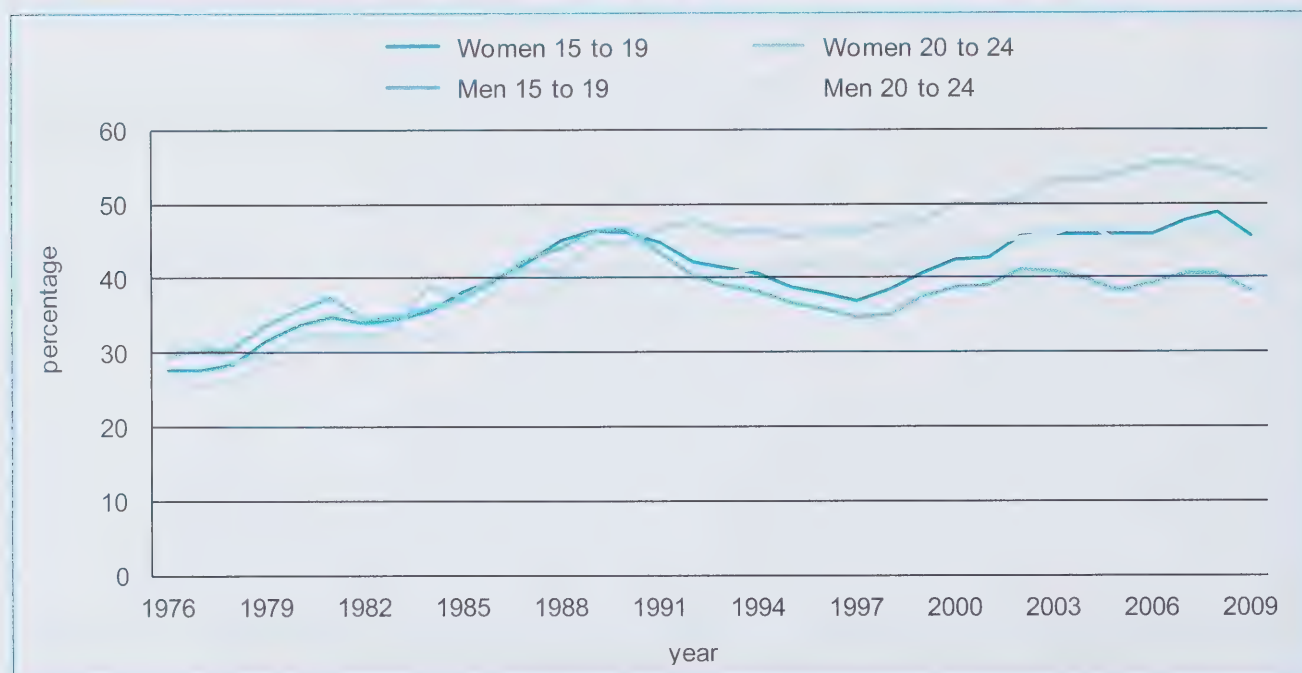
Table 4.6**High school dropout rates, by province, 1990, 2000 and 2009**

Province	Women			Men		
	1990	2000	2009	1990	2000	2009
	percentage					
Canada	14.0	8.9	6.6	19.2	13.2	10.3
Newfoundland and Labrador	15.9	6.1	5.1	26.3	11.6	7.5
Prince Edward Island	13.4	7.0	6.3	26.9	15.9	9.6
Nova Scotia	15.1	8.3	9.4	23.1	13.2	10.0
New Brunswick	15.2	8.7	5.0	19.3	14.5	11.3
Quebec	14.4	10.1	8.3	21.1	17.2	13.9
Ontario	13.4	8.1	5.1	18.1	10.6	9.3
Manitoba	13.7	12.4	9.3	20.8	16.5	12.4
Saskatchewan	17.0	9.7	8.3	19.3	12.7	11.4
Alberta	15.1	9.0	8.6	19.1	14.9	10.4
British Columbia	12.6	8.2	5.6	15.7	10.5	7.0

Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1990, 2000 and 2009.

Paid work during high school

If we look at the change in labour market participation over a long period (namely holding a job or looking for one), we see an almost steady rise in the participation rate of full-time students aged 20 to 24 (29% in 1976, versus 53% in 2009) (Chart 4.4). Among those aged 15 to 19, the trend was somewhat different, as the participation rate dropped during the 1990s and then increased.

Chart 4.4**Participation rates of full-time students, by age group, Canada, 1976 to 2009**

Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976 to 2009.

Students who work a few hours per week while going to school are not necessarily exposed to greater risks of failing. Although working full time can be more problematic, this reality affects only a minority of students. In 2009, 1% of full-time students aged 15 to 19 were working full time, a percentage that does not vary by gender (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7**Full-time students holding a full- or part-time job, by age group, Canada, 2009**

Job	15 to 19			20 to 24		
	Both sexes	Women	Men	Both sexes	Women	Men
	percentage					
Total — Employment Rate	34.1	38.5	29.6	44.6	49.4	38.9
Working full-time	1.0	0.9	1.2	5.7	5.1	6.4
Working part-time	33.1	37.7	28.5	38.9	44.4	32.5
	thousands					
Population	1,733.2	872.9	860.3	783.3	421.9	361.4
Employment ¹	591.2	336.3	255.0	349.1	208.6	140.5

1. Full-time and part-time.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2009.

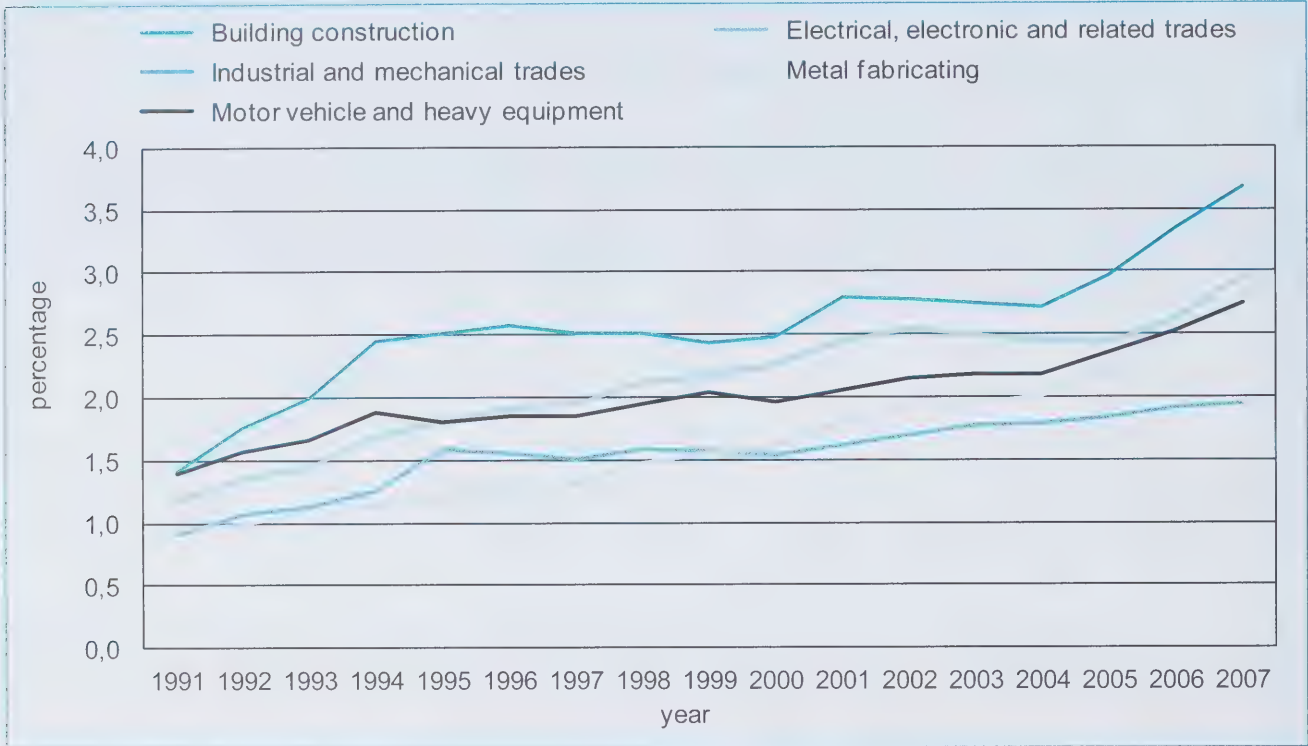
Even so, female students were more likely than their male counterparts to work part time. For example, 38% of full-time female students aged 15 to 19 were working part time, compared to 28% of men in the same age group. A similar difference was seen among those aged 20 to 24.

Trade schools and registered apprenticeship training programs

Registered apprenticeship training programs include six major trade groups: building construction, electrical, electronic and related trades, food and services, industrial and related mechanical trades, metal fabricating, and motor vehicle and heavy equipment. The only one of these trade groups in which women are a majority is food and service trades (with women accounting for 65% of enrolments in 2007, up from 50% in 1991).

However, women are definitely in the minority in all the other registered apprenticeship training programs like building construction or electrical and electronic trades. For example, the percentage of women enrolled in building construction programs was 3.7% in 2007, a slight increase over the 1.4% in 1991 (Chart 4.5). A similar increase in female enrolments is common to most of the other non-traditional programs.

Chart 4.5
Women in registered apprenticeship training programs, by non-traditional trade group, Canada, 1991 to 2007

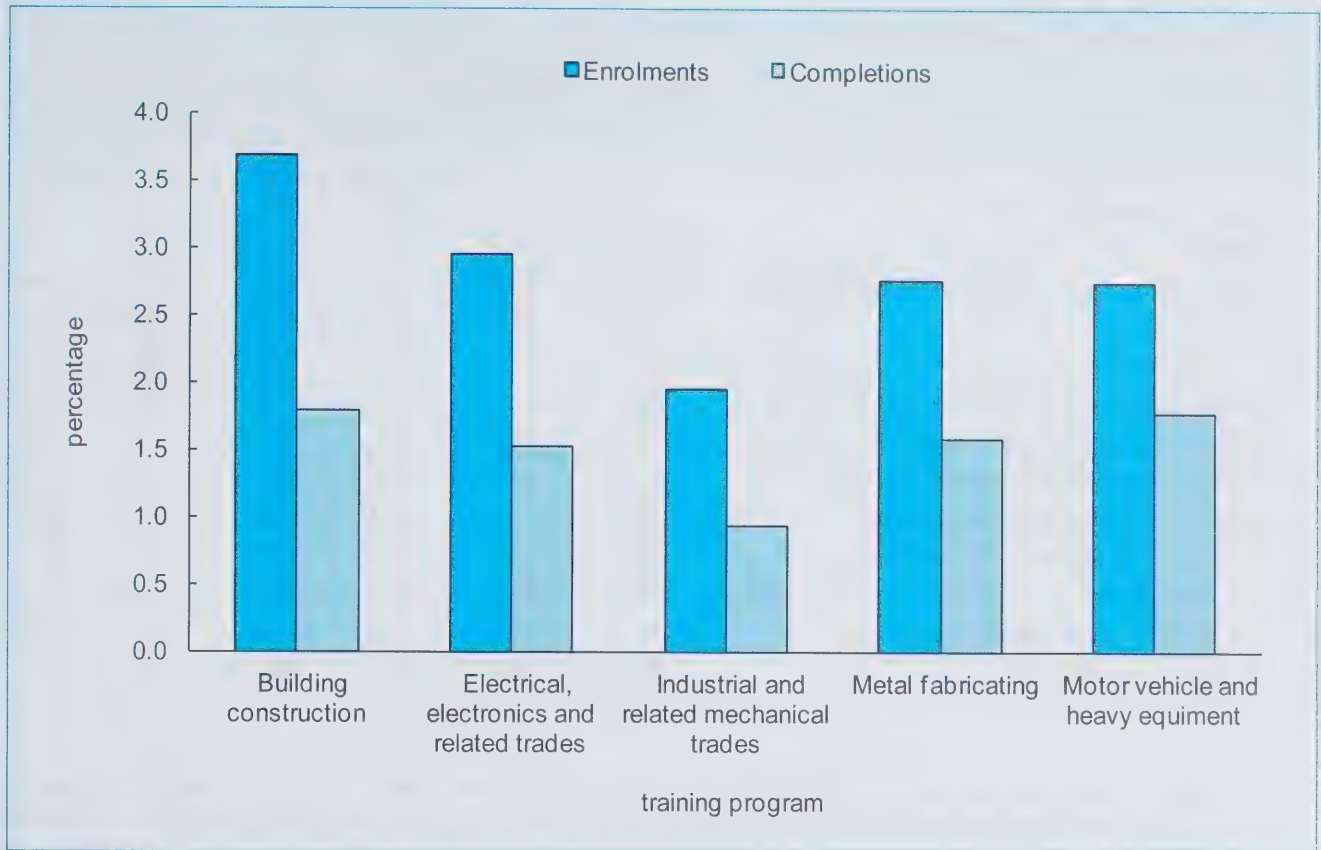


Sources: Statistics Canada, Registered Apprenticeship Information System, 1991 to 2007.

Despite the increased number of women in registered apprenticeship training programs, many of them drop out and do not earn their certificate. In 2007, although women accounted for 3.0% of enrolments in training programs for electrical, electronic and related trades, they accounted for only 1.5% of all completions in these fields of study (Chart 4.6).

Chart 4.6

Women among enrolments and completions in registered apprenticeship training programs, by non-traditional trade group, Canada, 2007



Source: Statistics Canada, Registered Apprenticeship Information System, 2007.

College studies

Since women are more likely than men to earn a high school diploma, it is not surprising to find that they also account for the majority of enrolments in college programs (Table 4.8). The proportion of women is even greater among graduates. In 2006/2007, women accounted for 56% of college enrolments and 59% of graduates. In the most popular college program, namely humanities, the difference between enrolments and graduates was even more pronounced: women accounted for 57% of enrolments, but 62% of graduates.

Table 4.8
Women among enrolments and graduates of the various college programs,
Canada, 2000 to 2007

College program	Enrolments			Graduates		
	2000/2001	2003/2004	2006/2007	2000/2001	2003/2004	2006/2007
	percentage					
Total — College programs	55.7	55.7	55.5	59.3	60.0	59.2
Personal improvement and leisure	54.0	63.1	68.1	70.0	84.8	88.7
Education	88.3	84.8	84.3	91.8	88.8	86.5
Visual and Performing Arts and Communication Technology	61.3	61.6	62.1	62.0	61.1	64.0
Humanities	58.3	58.0	57.2	62.4	62.7	62.2
Social and Behavioural Sciences, Law	78.6	78.1	80.1	79.3	80.5	82.1
Business, Management and Public Administration	64.3	61.5	60.6	71.6	69.0	66.1
Physical and Life Sciences, and Technologies	53.1	49.8	53.1	59.2	52.3	54.3
Mathematics, Computer and Information Sciences	27.6	22.3	23.6	33.2	26.2	23.4
Architecture, Engineering and Related Services	14.6	13.2	13.4	16.5	15.2	14.0
Agriculture, Natural Resources and Conservation	38.8	38.9	39.5	40.2	44.1	41.4
Health, Parks, Recreation and Fitness	82.9	82.7	81.5	84.3	84.6	83.7
Personal, Protective and Transportation Services	41.1	39.2	39.2	41.2	42.1	40.0
Other instructional programs	57.5	55.4	48.7	50.0	52.7	56.9

Sources: Statistics Canada, Postsecondary Student Information System, 2000/2001 to 2006/2007.

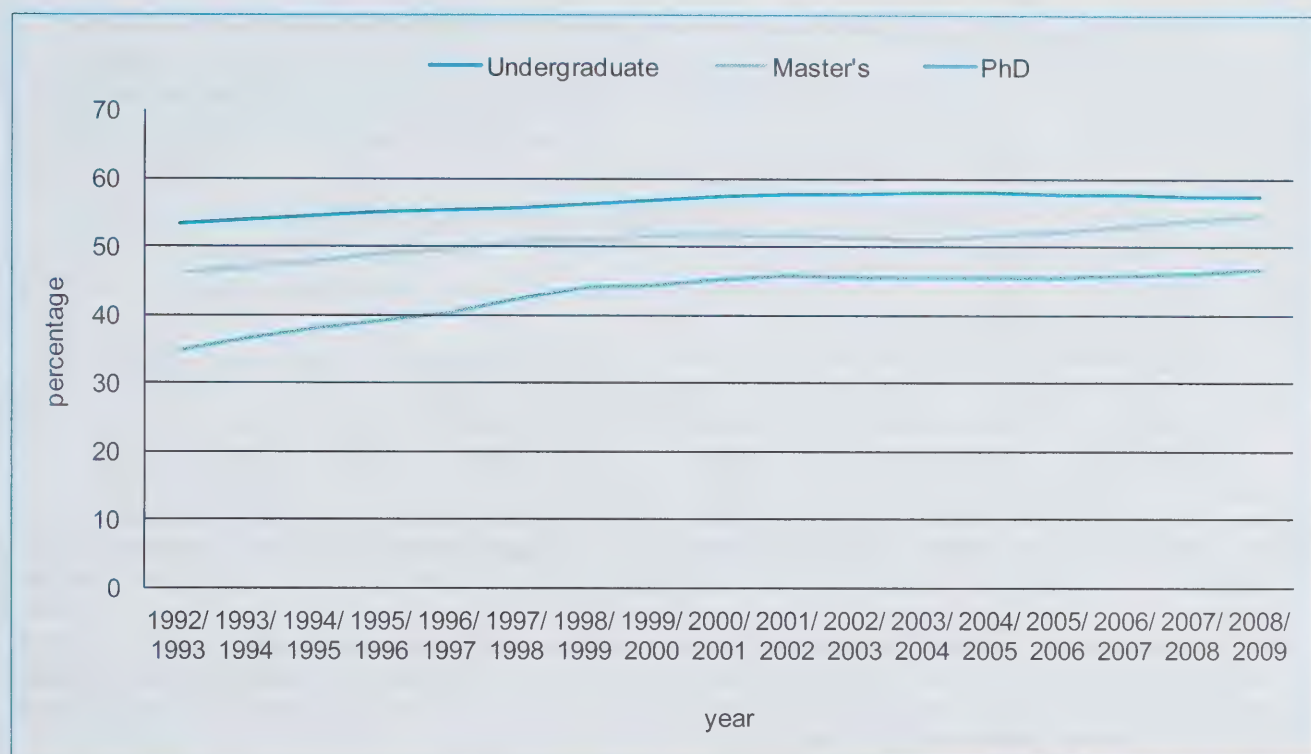
The proportion of women among both enrolments and completions varied greatly from one college program to another. For example, women made up 87% of graduates in education programs and accounted for 84% of those in the field of health, parks, recreation and fitness. The two fields in which the smallest proportion of women were recorded were mathematics, computer and information sciences (23% of graduates), and architecture, engineering and related services (14% of graduates). In these two fields, the share of women graduates was lower in 2006/2007 than it had been in the early 2000s.

University studies

Since the early 1990s, women have made up the majority of full-time students enrolled in undergraduate university programs (Chart 4.7). The proportion of women among students enrolled in undergraduate programs has never reached or exceeded 60%. However, their percentage among graduates has risen above this threshold since 2001. In 2008 for example, 62% of all university undergraduates were women (Chart 4.8).

Chart 4.7

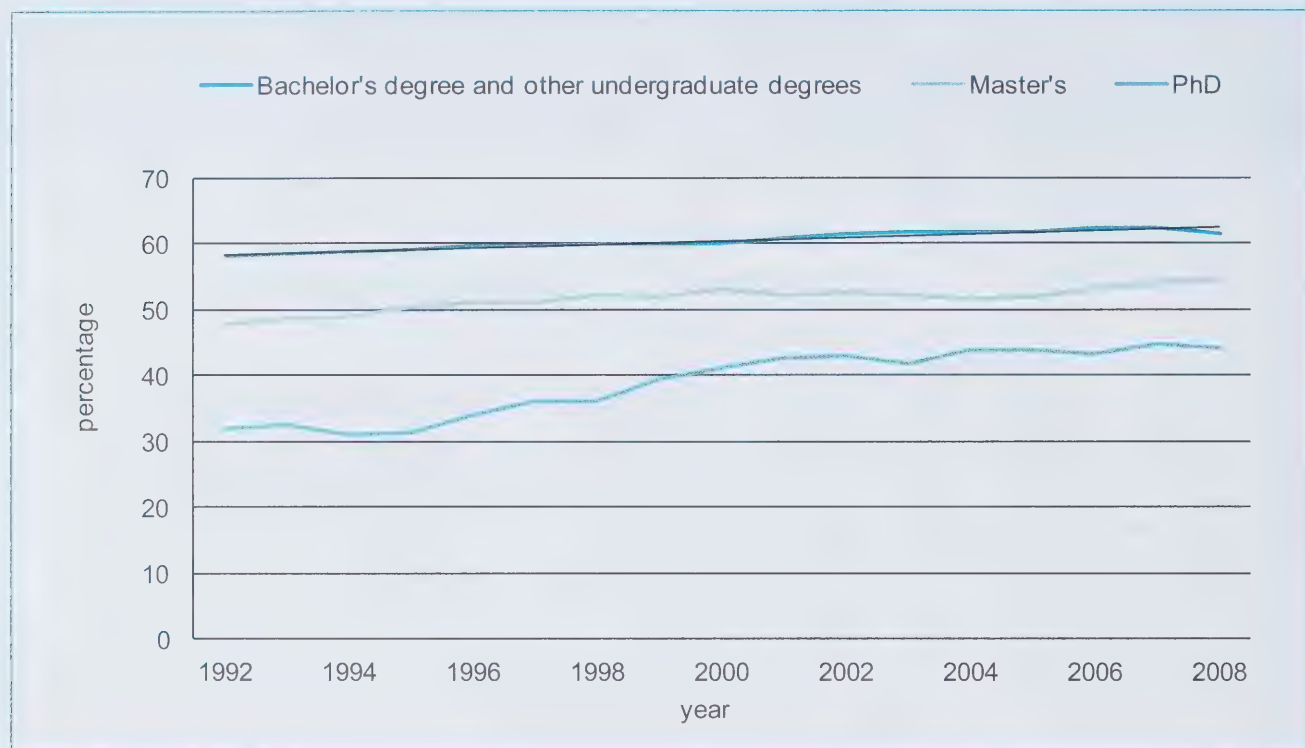
Percentage of women among full-time university enrolments, by program level, Canada, 1992/1993 to 2008/2009



Sources: Statistics Canada, Post-Secondary Student Information System, 1992/1993 to 2008/2009.

Chart 4.8

Percentage of women among university graduates, by program level, Canada, 1992 to 2008



Sources: Statistics Canada, Post-Secondary Student Information System, 1992 to 2008.

The proportion of female Master's graduates is also increasing: in 1997, it passed the 50% mark and in 2008, reached 54%. At the PhD level, although female students remain in the minority, their proportion has increased even more than in the other two postsecondary levels. In 1992, 32% of all graduates with a PhD were women, a proportion that climbed to 44% in 2008 (Chart 4.8).

Women and university programs

Like at the college level, women and men tend to choose different university programs (Table 4.9). In 2008, women accounted for over three out of four graduates in education and in health sciences programs. In humanities, in visual and performing arts and communications technologies, as well as in social and behavioural sciences and law, roughly two out of three graduates were women.

Table 4.9

Percentage of women among university graduates, by field of study, Canada, 1992 and 2008

Field of study	1992	2008
	percentage	
Total — Instructional programs	56.4	60.0
Architecture, engineering and related services	17.5	22.2
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	35.2	30.4
Personal, protective and transportation services	18.2	44.9
Business, management and public administration	51.4	53.0
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	36.7	55.9
Physical and life sciences, and technologies	45.6	57.3
Humanities	63.7	64.3
Visual and performing arts and communication technology	65.9	66.5
Social and behavioural sciences, law	59.3	67.0
Other instructional programs	73.6	69.4
Education	72.6	76.1
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	68.0	77.0

Sources: Statistics Canada, Postsecondary Student Information System, 1992 and 2008.

The scenario was completely different for the architecture, engineering and related services program, where only 22% of graduates were women in 2008 (up from 18% in 1990). In the mathematics, computer and information sciences programs, 30% of graduates were women, down from 35% in 1990. The proportion of women graduates increased in all the other university programs, except the residual category “Other instructional programs”.

Studying part time at university

In the early 1990s, women were more likely than men to study part time at university. In 1992/1993, 33% of women undergraduates were studying part time, compared with only 24% of men (Table 4.10). In 2008/2009, this difference had nearly disappeared at the undergraduate level, with 20% of the women studying part time compared with 18% of the men.

Table 4.10

Percentage of university students enrolled part-time, by level of program, Canada, 1992/1993 and 2008/2009

Sex	Undergraduate		Master's		PhD	
	1992/1993	2008/2009	1992/1993	2008/2009	1992/1993	2008/2009
	percentage					
Women	32.7	20.3	44.0	30.3	19.7	6.2
Men	24.4	18.3	37.1	26.7	15.1	5.8

Sources: Statistics Canada, Postsecondary Student Information System, 1992/1993 and 2008/2009.

Employment earnings of women and men by level of schooling

Even though women are more likely than men to go to college or university, they do not necessarily end up with higher employment earnings than men when they enter the job market.⁸⁶ In 2005, young women aged 25 to 29 with full-year, full-time work were earning 85 cents for each dollar earned by their male counterparts (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11
Employment income in 2005, by age group and educational attainment, Canada

Educational attainment	25 to 29			30 to 34			35 to 39		
	Women	Men	ratio	Women	Men	ratio	Women	Men	ratio
	dollars			dollars			dollars		
Total	32,084	37,684	0.85	36,891	46,709	0.79	38,799	51,579	0.75
No certificate, diploma or degree	20,574	30,610	0.67	22,639	35,159	0.64	24,391	38,457	0.63
High school diploma or equivalent	26,000	33,567	0.77	29,768	40,245	0.74	32,000	44,668	0.72
Registered apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma	24,741	37,788	0.65	27,152	43,487	0.62	29,642	47,680	0.62
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma or university certificate or diploma below bachelor level	31,251	39,199	0.80	34,957	48,000	0.73	38,121	52,936	0.72
University certificate or diploma above bachelor level	40,441	45,291	0.89	47,573	58,140	0.82	52,941	65,166	0.81
Degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry	47,464	47,000	1.01	54,467	58,362	0.93	62,317	70,000	0.89
Masters/doctorate	43,086	44,850	0.96	53,064	61,816	0.86	60,342	72,201	0.84

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Employment earnings differed between women and men according to their level of schooling. For example, women aged 25 to 29 with a graduate or professional degree (Master's or PhD) and with full-year full-time work were earning 96 cents for each dollar earned by their male counterparts in 2005. Among those women with a bachelor's degree, this ratio was 89 cents. However, young women with a registered apprenticeship certificate or a trade school certificate were earning only 65 cents for each dollar earned by their male counterparts (Table 4.11). The trade programs most often chosen by women, such as hair-dressing, lead to lower-paying jobs than the ones favoured by men, such as building construction or electrical, electronics and related trades.

Among women aged 25 to 29 who graduated from university, employment earnings were generally to men's advantage (Table 4.12). For example, among graduates in business, management and public administration, the median earnings of men with full-year full-time work was \$46,500, compared to \$41,700 for women (a ratio of 0.90). The fields of "Physical and life sciences, and technologies" and "Health, parks, recreation and fitness" were the two exceptions to this wage premium for men. In the latter case, women aged 25 to 29 were earning \$1.07 for each dollar earned by men in the same age group who had studied in the same field.

86. See also the chapter on economic well-being, particularly the text box on differences in wage gains between women and men.

Table 4.12

Median earnings of full-time, full-year employees, university graduates, by field of study and age group, Canada, 2006

Field of study	25 to 29					30 to 34				
	Distribution		Median income			Distribution		Median income		
	Women	Men	Women	Men	ratio	Women	Men	Women	Men	ratio
	percentage		dollars			percentage		dollars		
Education	9.5	2.3	41,154	43,174	0.95	10.7	3.4	47,561	52,916	0.90
Visual and performing arts, and communications technologies	4.6	4.1	30,530	33,496	0.91	3.6	3.7	39,041	40,482	0.96
Humanities	5.4	3.3	34,407	36,304	0.95	5.7	3.8	41,392	47,200	0.88
Social and behavioural sciences and law	15.9	6.9	38,402	41,448	0.93	16.8	8.3	47,303	56,000	0.84
Business, management and public administration	27.9	17.2	41,728	46,539	0.90	27.9	17.3	50,250	64,833	0.78
Physical and life sciences and technologies	4.2	3.5	37,677	36,827	1.02	4.0	3.8	46,647	55,182	0.85
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	3.7	11.0	44,745	47,987	0.93	4.1	8.9	53,090	62,227	0.85
Architecture, engineering and related services	4.3	37.0	47,977	52,175	0.92	4.3	36.1	55,027	65,281	0.84
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	1.9	3.3	41,162	45,355	0.91	1.7	3.3	47,506	56,278	0.84
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	16.9	4.4	49,969	46,872	1.07	16.6	5.2	55,650	58,666	0.95
Personal, protective and transportation services	5.8	7.0	38,200	45,135	0.85	4.8	6.4	55,000	66,612	0.83

Note: Full-year employees: self-employed workers are excluded from this table. University graduates include persons with a Bachelor's degree or higher.

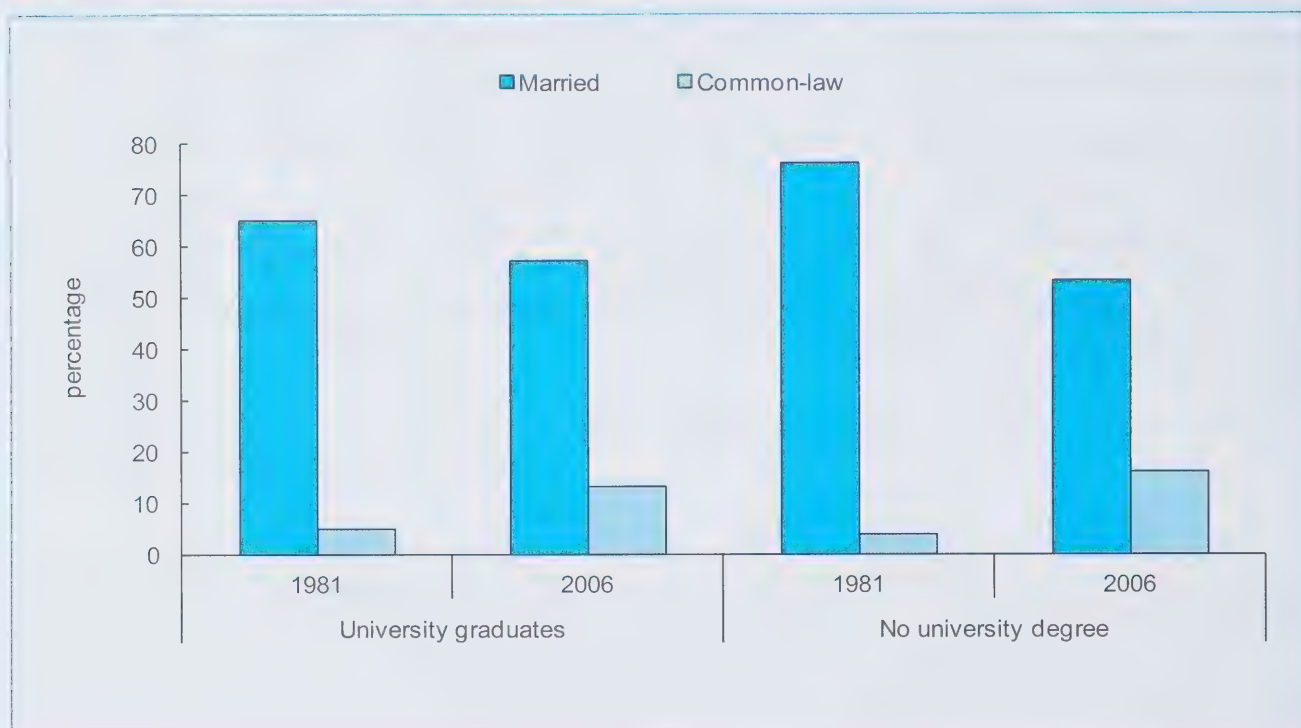
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Female university graduates and marriage⁸⁷

In 1981, women aged 25 to 49 who were university graduates were less likely to get married than those who were less educated. This is no longer the case today. Since 2001, there has even been a positive relationship between having a university education and the likelihood of being married. As a result of a significant decrease in the number of married women among less-educated women, women aged 25 to 49 with a university degree were more likely to be married in 2006 than those who were less educated (57% and 53%, respectively) (see the box chart 4.1 below). Although women with a university degree were somewhat less likely to live common-law, they were still more likely to live as part of a couple than those who were not graduates.

Box chart 4.1

Percentage of women who are married or in a common-law union aged 25 to 49, by graduation from university, Canada, 1981 and 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1981 and 2006.

When both spouses have the same education level, for example a university degree, this is called educational homogamy. Due to the rapid growth in the proportion of female university graduates, men with a university degree had more opportunities of finding a spouse with a degree in 2006 than in 1981. Thus in 2006, among married men with a university degree, 67% of them had a spouse with the same level of education as they had, whereas that proportion was only 38% in 1981.

For their part, married women with a university degree aged 25 to 49 had continued their high tendency towards educational homogamy. In 2006, the educational homogamy rate of women with a university degree was 64%, compared to 67% 25 years before.

87. Martin, Laetitia and Feng Hou. 2010. "Sharing their lives: women, marital trends and education", *Canadian Social Trends*, no. 90 (winter), Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-008-X.

Women in the field of education

Women increasingly make up the majority of workers in education-related occupations. Therefore, young people are much more likely to have female teachers and professors throughout their academic career. The proportion of women is especially high at the elementary and preschool levels, where they make up 84% of the teaching staff (slightly up from 81% in 1996) (Table 4.13). In 1996, among secondary school teachers, there was near parity in terms of the representation of women and men. This is decreasingly the case because, in 2006, 57% of secondary school teachers were women.

Table 4.13

Women in teaching-related professions, Canada, 1996 and 2006

Profession	2006			1996	2006
	Total	Women number	Men	Women percentage	
Total — All teachers	667,990	435,820	232,170	61.8	65.2
Professors and teaching assistants at the university and postsecondary level	125,410	57,680	67,725	39.3	46.0
University professors	56,895	22,150	34,750	33.8	38.9
Teaching and research assistants at the postsecondary level	68,515	35,535	32,975	48.6	51.9
Teachers at the college level and in vocational schools	103,200	54,755	48,445	51.6	53.1
Teachers at the college level and other upgrading program instructors	103,200	54,755	48,445	51.6	53.1
Teachers at the secondary, primary and preschool levels and guidance counsellors	439,375	323,380	115,995	68.7	73.6
Teachers at the secondary level	161,095	92,295	68,805	50.6	57.3
Teachers at the primary and preschool levels	261,675	218,740	42,935	81.2	83.6
Guidance counsellors and educational counsellors	16,605	12,350	4,255	64.4	74.4

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

While women are also the majority among high school and college teachers, the situation is completely different at the university level. In 2006, the proportion of female university professors reached 39%, compared to 34% 10 years earlier (Table 4.13).

Participation in job-related studies or training programs

It is increasingly common for employees to be asked to upgrade their occupational knowledge and skills by taking job-related training. In 2008, 36% of people aged 25 to 64 had participated in job-related studies or training, an increase from 30% in 2002. These proportions were about the same for both women and men.

There was a difference between women and men in terms of the support they received from employers. In 2008, 46% of female workers had received support from their employer while taking a training or education program, a proportion that reached 55% among men (Table 4.14).

Table 4.14

Participation in job-related studies or training programs, Canada, 2002 and 2008

Participation	Both sexes		Women		Men	
	2002	2008	2002	2008 percentage	2002	2008
Proportion of Canadians aged 25 to 64 who took job-related studies or training						
Total — Studies or training	30.1	36.0	30.2	35.9	29.9	36.2
Studies	8.2	8.1	8.9	8.7	7.6	7.6
Training	24.6	30.6	24.5	30.1	24.7	31.2
Proportion of persons who received support from an employer from among working Canadians aged 25 to 64 who took a formal education program ¹	52.0	49.9	48.0	46.0	56.5	54.6

1. In 2002, represents activities undertaken from January to December 2002. In 2008, represents activities undertaken from July 2007 to June 2008.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2003 Adult Education and Training Survey; and 2008 Access and Support to Education and Training Survey.

Chapter 5

Paid Work

By Vincent Ferrao

In 2009, 58.3% of women, representing 8.1 million women, were employed. This is more than double the number of women employed in 1976. Additionally, women's labour market experiences today differ vastly from 1976. Using the Labour Force Survey, this chapter of Women in Canada will examine the labour market experiences of women over time and compare them to that of men's. More specifically, it will examine employment and unemployment trends, part-time, education, women with children in the labour market, self-employment, occupations, unionization, multiple job-holding and temporary work trends.

Women in the labour market

The percentage of women who are employed has generally followed an upward trend over the past three decades, but has declined during economic downturns.

After the recession of the early 1990s, the percentage of employed women rose steadily, reaching 59.3% in 2008. In 2009, however, as the most recent labour market downturn took hold, it fell by a full percentage point in 2009 to 58.3%, representing 8,076,000 employed women (Table 5.1). However, for women the downturn's effects on employment were less severe than for men. In 2009, the share of men who were employed dropped much more steeply, 2.9 percentage points to 65.2%, than that of women. This repeats a similar pattern seen in the previous two recessions (those of the early 1980s and early 1990s), when the percentage of women who were employed fell much less steeply than that of men (Chart 5.1).

Table 5.1

Employment trends of women and men aged 15 and over, 1976 to 2009

Year	Women aged 15 and over		Men aged 15 and over		Women as a % of total employment
	thousands	%	thousands	%	
1976	3,618.2	41.9	6,129.3	72.7	37.1
1981	4,556.6	47.7	6,748.4	72.8	40.3
1986	5,138.2	50.3	6,870.3	69.6	42.8
1991	5,790.5	52.8	7,066.9	66.9	45.0
1996	6,099.0	52.1	7,322.4	65.0	45.4
2001	6,910.3	55.6	8,035.8	66.8	46.2
2002	7,126.0	56.6	8,184.4	67.1	46.5
2003	7,324.2	57.4	8,348.1	67.6	46.7
2004	7,466.4	57.8	8,480.6	67.8	46.8
2005	7,575.0	57.8	8,594.7	67.7	46.8
2006	7,757.2	58.3	8,727.1	67.7	47.1
2007	7,977.5	59.1	8,888.9	68.0	47.3
2008	8,104.5	59.3	9,021.3	68.1	47.3
2009	8,076.2	58.3	8,772.7	65.2	47.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Chart 5.1
Employment rates of women and men, 1976 to 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Employment by province

Women and men in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta were most likely to be employed in 2009; their employment rates were higher than those of women and men in all other provinces (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2
Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who are employed, by province, 1976 to 2009

Provinces	Women Men		Women Men		Women Men		Women Men		Women Men		Women Men	
	1976		1986		1991		1996		2001		2006	
	percentage											
Newfoundland and Labrador	27.7	57.5	35.8	52.5	40.8	51.3	38.5	46.1	44.6	51.0	48.3	52.7
Prince Edward Island	38.0	66.3	46.1	63.2	49.1	59.8	51.3	61.8	55.0	63.2	58.9	63.5
Nova Scotia	36.0	65.8	43.0	61.4	47.1	61.6	46.4	58.0	51.6	60.6	55.0	61.1
New Brunswick	34.0	62.2	41.2	58.1	44.8	58.1	46.7	57.0	51.1	59.2	55.1	61.3
Quebec	37.4	70.5	45.7	66.8	48.1	64.1	47.7	61.7	51.7	64.4	55.6	65.0
Ontario	45.8	75.3	54.4	73.9	55.6	68.7	53.6	66.1	57.6	68.6	59.0	68.1
Manitoba	44.5	73.8	52.8	70.8	54.6	68.1	54.7	68.7	58.1	70.9	60.7	71.2
Saskatchewan	41.1	75.1	52.1	71.4	54.6	69.6	54.2	68.1	55.7	68.2	60.6	71.3
Alberta	49.2	80.0	57.1	73.6	59.5	73.8	60.7	73.9	62.8	75.1	64.6	76.9
British Columbia	41.9	71.3	47.9	66.3	53.5	67.3	53.6	66.5	54.6	63.6	58.0	67.2
Canada	41.9	72.7	50.3	69.6	52.8	66.9	52.1	65.0	55.6	66.8	58.3	67.7

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

In 2009, Alberta had the highest percentage of employed women in the country, at 64.1%, a trend that began in the mid-1970s.

The percentage of women working in Saskatchewan in 2009 was 61.8%; in Manitoba, the rate was 60.3%.

The lowest employment rates for women and men were in Newfoundland and Labrador, where 47.8% of women and 52.5% of men were working at a job or business in 2009.

Women in all provinces continued to have lower employment rates than men in 2009. However, the gap narrowed in most provinces: women were generally less affected by the labour market downturn.

Education level linked to employment rate

Even during economic downturns, the likelihood of being employed increases the higher the level of educational attainment. In 2009, 74.7% of women with a university degree, 59.1% of those with some postsecondary training and 56.2% of high school graduates were employed. In contrast, 35.0% of women who had attended, but had not completed, high school and just 13.7% of those who had not gone beyond grade 8 were employed that year (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3
Percentage of the population who are employed by highest level of educational attainment, 2009

Level of education	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	15 to 24		25 to 44		45 and over		15 and over	
	percentage							
0 to 8 years	19.4	26.0	40.8	59.1	10.8	22.7	13.7	27.1
Some high school	40.5	37.6	52.0	71.0	26.4	44.8	35.0	47.0
High school graduate	65.1	64.9	69.6	81.3	47.7	59.3	56.2	67.7
Some post-secondary	58.7	55.5	68.7	79.1	52.0	56.7	59.1	62.9
Post-secondary certificate or diploma	77.2	73.0	82.1	86.8	57.3	62.6	69.2	73.5
University degree	73.6	73.7	82.8	88.3	64.4	67.4	74.7	77.3
Total of all education levels	57.1	53.6	77.1	83.8	46.3	56.1	58.3	65.2

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Regardless of educational attainment, women are still less likely than men to be employed, although the gaps are narrowest among women with higher levels of education. Among those with a university degree, for example, 74.7% of women, versus 77.3% of men, were employed in 2009. Similarly, among those with a non-university postsecondary certificate or diploma, 69.2% of women, compared with 73.5% of men, were employed. In contrast, women with less than a grade 9 education were only half as likely to be employed that year as their male counterparts—13.7% versus 27.1%. These differences can be partly explained by the variation in the education and work experiences of different age groups. At the same time, these patterns generally hold among all age groups over the age of 25.

These patterns do not hold, however, in the 15-to-24 age group, where young women with higher levels of education perform better than young men with the same levels of education. For example, 77.2% of women under 25 with a non-university postsecondary certificate or diploma were employed in 2009, compared with 73.0% of men.

Young women saw steep employment losses during recent downturn

Women in nearly all age groups were affected by the recent downturn in the labour market. Women aged 15 to 24 were particularly hard hit: their employment rate fell from 60.3% in 2008 to 57.1% in 2009. Even with this decline, they fared better than young men, whose employment rate dropped from 58.9% to 53.6% over the same period (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4

Percentage of women and men employed by age, 1976 to 2009

Year	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	15 to 24		25 to 44		45 to 54		55 to 64	
	percentage							
1976	51.4	59.9	50.0	90.9	45.6	88.9	30.3	72.9
1981	57.2	63.5	60.3	90.1	51.8	88.4	31.1	70.4
1986	58.1	60.6	66.4	86.3	55.9	85.7	30.3	62.3
1991	57.6	57.1	70.5	83.6	64.3	84.1	32.4	56.9
1996	52.0	53.3	70.9	83.0	66.3	82.4	33.5	53.7
2001	56.2	56.5	75.3	85.9	72.3	84.0	39.4	57.3
2002	57.6	57.4	75.9	85.7	74.2	84.3	41.4	59.0
2003	58.6	57.9	76.2	86.1	75.4	84.5	45.3	60.9
2004	58.4	57.7	77.0	86.3	76.0	85.3	46.0	62.0
2005	58.9	56.7	77.0	86.7	75.6	85.0	46.8	63.1
2006	59.5	57.9	77.2	86.8	76.8	85.1	48.7	62.8
2007	59.8	59.1	78.4	86.9	77.9	85.1	50.7	63.6
2008	60.3	58.9	78.0	87.2	78.2	85.3	51.9	63.3
2009	57.1	53.6	77.1	83.8	77.3	82.9	53.1	62.3

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

The employment rate for women aged 25 to 44 dipped to 77.1%; for women 45 to 54 it fell to 77.3%, a decline of 0.9 percentage points for both. However, for women aged 55 to 64, the employment rate rose from 51.9% in 2008 to 53.1% in 2009. Among men, the employment rate fell much more steeply for those between 25 and 54 years of age, and declined moderately for those aged 55 to 64.

Women, despite considerable strides over the past three decades, are still less likely to be employed than men. The exception is young women aged 15 to 24 who, in recent years, have consistently posted higher employment rates than young men.

More employed mothers

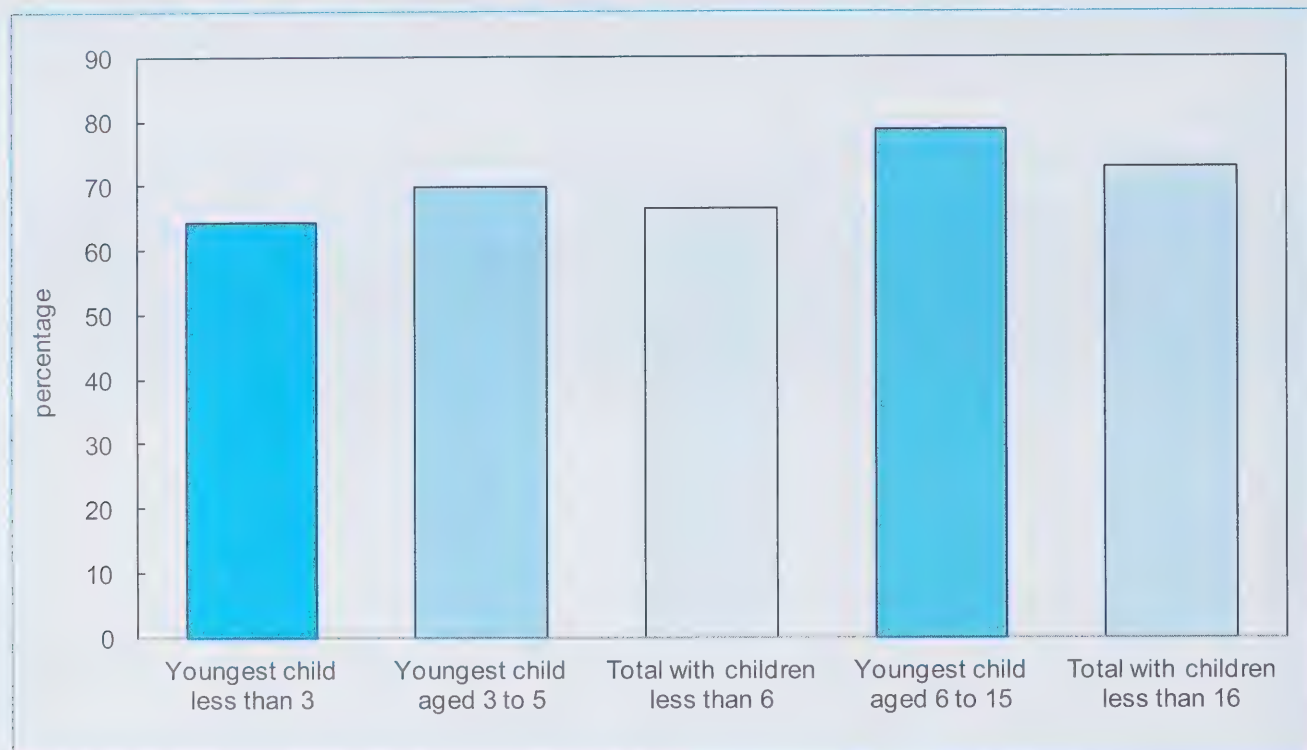
The employment rate of women with children has generally been increasing over the past three decades. In 2009, 72.9% of women with children under 16 living at home were part of the employed workforce. Although the percentage has declined compared with 2008 and 2007, it is still up from 39.1% in 1976 (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5
Employment rate of women with children by age of youngest child, 1976 to 2009

Year	Youngest child less than 3	Youngest child aged 3 to 5	Youngest child less than 6	Youngest child aged 6 to 15	Youngest child less than 16	Women under 55 with no children at home
	percentage					
1976	27.6	36.8	31.4	46.4	39.1	60.9
1981	39.3	46.7	42.1	56.2	49.3	66.0
1986	49.4	54.5	51.4	61.9	56.7	69.3
1991	54.4	60.1	56.5	69.0	62.8	72.6
1996	57.8	60.5	58.9	69.8	64.5	72.4
2001	61.3	67.0	63.7	75.3	70.1	76.8
2002	61.9	68.1	64.5	77.0	71.4	77.9
2003	62.7	68.5	65.1	76.7	71.6	79.0
2004	64.5	69.4	66.6	77.0	72.4	79.3
2005	64.7	70.6	67.2	77.4	72.8	78.7
2006	64.3	69.4	66.4	78.2	72.9	79.9
2007	65.1	72.6	68.1	79.4	74.3	80.9
2008	64.6	70.3	66.8	80.0	73.8	81.2
2009	64.4	69.7	66.5	78.5	72.9	80.4

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

The growth in the employment rate among women with children has been particularly sharp over the past three decades, women with children are still less likely to be employed than women without children. In 2009, 80.4% of women under age 55 without children were employed.

Chart 5.2**Percentage of employed mothers, by age of youngest child, 2009**

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

The strong growth in labour force participation among women with young children is reflected in their employment rates. By 2009, 64.4% of women with children less than age 3 were employed, more than double the figure in 1976, when only 27.6% of these women were employed. Similarly, 69.7% of women whose youngest child was from 3 to 5 years of age were working in 2009, up from 36.8% in 1976 (Chart 5.2).

Although the proportion of women who were employed and had pre-school-aged children has grown, they are still less likely to be employed than women with school-aged children. In 2009, 66.5% of women with children under age 6 were employed, compared with 78.5% of those whose youngest child was aged 6 to 15.

Mothers in two-parent families more likely to be employed than lone-parent mothers

Female lone parents are less likely to be employed than mothers in two-parent families. In 2009, 68.9% of female lone parents with children less than age 16 living at home were employed, compared with 73.8% of their counterparts in two-parent families. This represents a major shift from the late 1970s, when female lone parents were more likely to be employed than mothers with partners (Table 5.6).

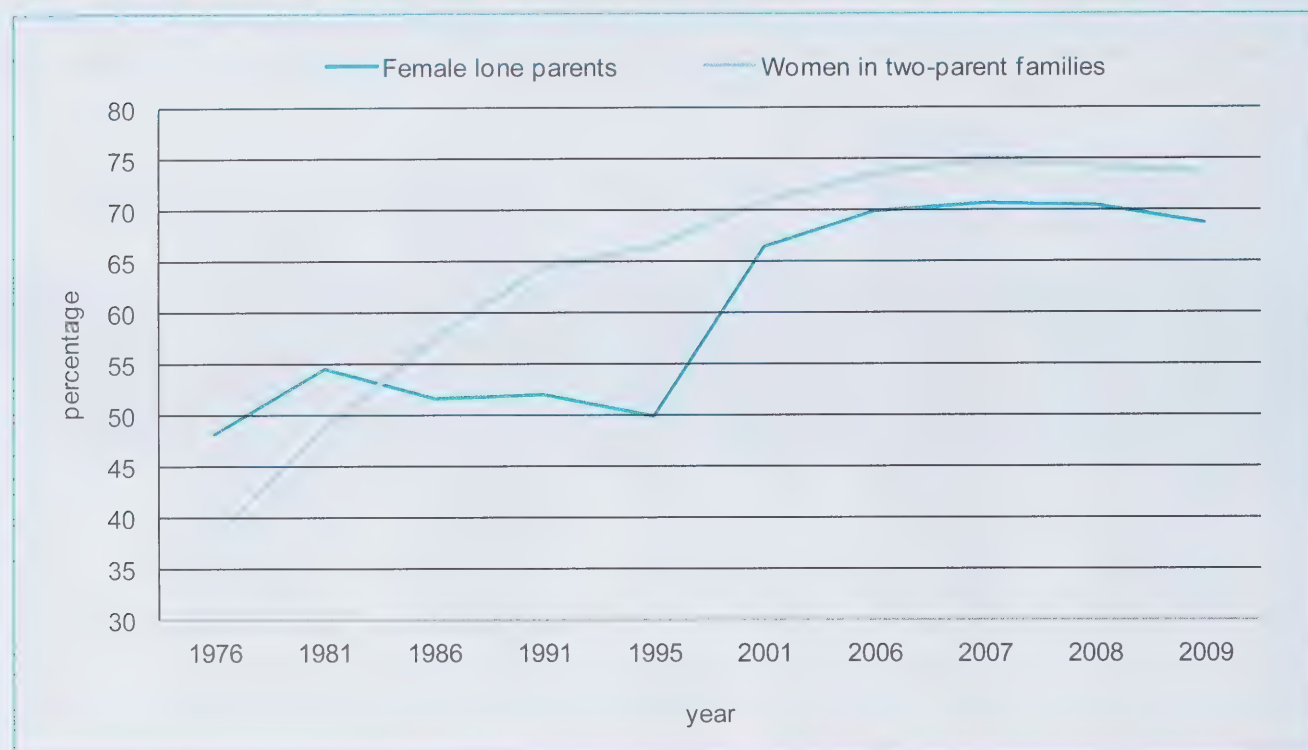
Table 5.6
Employment rate of women with children by family status and presence of youngest child, 1976 to 2009

Year	Female lone parents				Women with partners			
	Youngest child less than 3	Youngest child aged 3 to 5	Youngest child aged 6 to 15	Youngest child less than 16	Youngest child less than 3	Youngest child aged 3 to 5	Youngest child aged 6 to 15	Youngest child less than 16
	percentage							
1976	27.6	45.1	54.0	48.3	27.6	36.0	45.5	38.3
1981	32.5	51.8	61.5	54.5	39.7	46.0	55.4	48.7
1986	29.8	47.2	60.1	51.7	51.1	55.6	62.2	57.4
1991	30.9	47.5	62.3	52.1	57.0	62.3	70.3	64.5
1996	32.9	46.2	62.6	53.1	61.0	63.3	71.5	66.6
2001	45.5	61.0	73.7	66.5	63.2	68.3	75.7	70.9
2002	46.2	60.2	74.4	67.1	63.7	69.7	77.7	72.3
2003	46.5	61.1	75.2	68.3	64.5	69.9	77.1	72.3
2004	46.1	63.3	74.9	68.3	66.5	70.6	77.5	73.2
2005	47.2	64.6	75.8	69.2	66.8	71.8	77.9	73.6
2006	46.3	66.2	76.6	69.9	66.5	70.1	78.6	73.6
2007	49.8	68.1	76.9	70.8	67.0	73.5	80.0	75.0
2008	49.1	65.6	77.9	70.6	66.3	71.2	80.5	74.5
2009	45.9	66.0	75.7	68.9	66.5	70.5	79.2	73.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Chart 5.3

Percentage of employed women with children, by family status, 1976 to 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

In the intervening years, the employment rate of mothers in two-parent families grew steadily, surpassing that of female lone parents in the mid-1980s. However, in recent years, the proportion of employed lone mothers has increased substantially, jumping 20 percentage points from 1995 to 2008 (Chart 5.3). Over the same period, the proportion of employed mothers in two-parent families increased by 8 percentage points. The labour market downturn in 2009 affected female lone parents: the employment rate of such women with a youngest child under 16 slipped from 70.6% in 2008 to 68.9% in 2009. The rate also declined for women in two-parent families with children under 16, from 74.5% in 2008 to 73.8% in 2009.

The presence of young children also has a greater impact on the employment of lone mothers than on their counterparts with partners. In 2009, 45.9% of lone mothers with children under age 3 were employed, compared with 66.5% of mothers in two-parent families with children under age 3. Among those whose youngest child was aged 3 to 5, 66.0% of female lone parents, compared with 70.5% of mothers in two-parent families, were part of the paid workforce in 2009. The employment-related consequences of the downturn in the labour market were more severe for female lone parents with the youngest child aged less than 3 than for women in two-parent families with children in the same age group. The employment rate of women in two-parent families with children less than 3 years of age was nearly unchanged in 2009, at 66.5%, compared with 2008. In contrast, the employment rate for lone-parent mothers dropped from 49.1% in 2008 to 45.9% in 2009.

Women are more likely to work part time than men

While about 73% of employed women worked full time in 2009, women were, nevertheless, more likely than men to work part time. In 2009, 2.2 million women worked part time. The share of women working fewer than 30 hours per week at their main job has risen slightly from 23.6% in 1976 to 26.9% in 2009. This contrasts with men, whose part-time rate in 2009 at 11.9%, was less than half that of women. The men's rate, however, has nevertheless more than doubled for men since 1976, when 5.9% of men worked part time.

Of all part-time workers in 2009, nearly 7 out of 10 were women. This proportion has changed little over the past three decades (Table 5.7).

Table 5.7
Part-time employment of women and men, 1976 to 2009

Year	Women employed part-time thousands	Women employed part-time percentage	Men employed part-time percentage	Women as a % of total part-time
1976	854.2	23.6	5.9	70.1
1981	1,187.4	26.1	7.2	70.9
1986	1,419.0	27.6	8.9	69.9
1991	1,616.8	27.9	10.1	69.3
1996	1,769.1	29.0	10.8	69.1
2001	1,863.2	27.0	10.5	68.9
2002	1,974.6	27.7	11.0	68.8
2003	2,041.9	27.9	11.1	68.8
2004	2,027.6	27.2	10.9	68.8
2005	2,032.8	26.8	10.8	68.6
2006	2,028.5	26.1	10.8	68.2
2007	2,084.3	26.1	11.0	68.0
2008	2,135.9	26.4	11.2	67.8
2009	2,174.2	26.9	11.9	67.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Over one-half of young women aged 15 to 24 worked part time in 2009, compared with 38.7% of men. This phenomenon became evident in the early 1990s and has changed little since then. In 1976, one-quarter of young women worked part time, and by 1993, the proportion had climbed to 50.2%. By 2009, the percentage of young women working part time reached 54.8%. This compares with about 20% of women who worked part time in 2009 in the core age group (25 to 54 years) and 28.3% of women aged 55 to 64.

Across all age groups, women are more likely than men to work part time. This is especially true of men and women over 25. In 2009, 19.5% of women aged 25 to 44 and 20.0% of women aged 45 to 54 worked part time; the rates for men in the same age groups were 5.8% and 5.1%, respectively (Table 5.8).

Table 5.8

Percentage of employed women and men working part-time by age, 1976 to 2009

Year	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	15 to 24		25 to 44		45 to 54		55 to 64	
	percentage							
1976	24.8	17.9	21.8	1.5	24.0	1.4	24.7	3.7
1981	29.0	21.3	23.1	2.1	27.3	2.1	27.6	4.3
1986	37.4	28.2	22.7	3.1	26.7	2.8	30.3	6.7
1991	45.1	36.5	22.3	3.9	24.0	3.4	32.0	8.6
1996	53.0	38.6	23.1	5.1	23.1	4.3	32.3	9.9
2001	50.4	36.8	21.1	4.7	21.3	4.4	29.1	9.9
2002	52.4	37.6	21.2	4.9	21.5	4.5	31.3	10.8
2003	52.8	37.7	21.2	4.9	21.3	4.7	31.0	10.7
2004	52.2	37.4	20.5	4.7	20.6	4.3	29.6	10.7
2005	52.4	36.8	20.0	4.9	20.1	4.5	29.3	10.3
2006	51.5	36.6	19.3	4.7	19.5	4.5	28.3	10.6
2007	52.5	36.9	19.1	4.8	19.0	4.4	28.5	10.6
2008	52.6	37.2	18.9	5.2	19.6	4.4	28.2	10.4
2009	54.8	38.7	19.5	5.8	20.0	5.1	28.3	11.9

Note: Part-time is expressed as a percentage of totals employed.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Most women who work part time do so either because they do not want full-time employment or because part-time work is more appropriate for their personal situation. In 2009, 27.7% of women employed part time reported they did not want full-time work—by personal preference—and 25.0% reported they were going to school (Table 5.9).

Table 5.9
Reasons for part-time employment by age, 2009

Reasons	Women				Men			
	15 to 24	25 to 44	45 and over	Total	15 to 24	25 to 44	45 and over	Total
	percentage							
Own illness	0.5	2.9	6.5	3.5	0.6	5.6	6.5	3.7
Caring for own children	1.4	34.2	5.5	13.4	F	3.2	1.1	1.1
Other personal/family responsibilities	0.7	4.3	5.9	3.8	0.5	1.7	1.8	1.2
Going to school	71.9	7.6	0.9	25.0	73.3	19.5	0.7	37.0
Personal preference	5.9	17.7	54.7	27.7	4.6	16.8	56.9	25.0
Other voluntary	0.4	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.5	1.9	1.3	1.1
Others	19.2	32.4	26.0	25.9	20.5	51.2	31.7	30.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	thousands							
Total employed part-time	673.9	694.6	805.6	2,174.2	464.7	226.2	355.5	1,046.4
	percentage							
Percentage employed part-time	54.8	19.5	24.6	26.9	38.7	5.8	9.6	11.9

Note: Others includes business conditions and unable to find work.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Some women, however, work part time because of childcare or other responsibilities. In 2009, nearly one in five female part-time workers said they worked part time because of personal or family responsibilities. That year, 13.4% said they did not work full time because they were caring for children, and 3.8% reported other family or personal responsibilities as the reason they worked part time. In sharp contrast, only 2.3% of male part-time workers cited these as reasons they did not work full time.

At the same time, a substantial number of women work part time because they cannot find full-time employment. In 2009, 25.9% of female part-time employees indicated reported wanting full-time employment, but only finding part-time work. Women were less likely than men to work part time involuntarily. In 2009, 30.9% of male part-time workers wanted full-time employment.

The reasons women work part time also varied considerably by age. Almost 35% of women aged 25 to 44, for example, stated that they worked part time to care for their children, compared with 5.5% of women aged 45 and older. In contrast, women aged 15 to 24 were most likely to work part time because they were going to school, while those aged 45 and over were most likely to not want full-time employment.

Increasing numbers of women are self-employed

A growing number of women are self-employed. In 2009, nearly 1 million women, 11.9% of all those with jobs, were self-employed, up from 8.6% in 1976. Self-employment has grown about as fast among women as it has among men in the past two decades, though women are still less likely than men to be self-employed: 11.9% versus 19.9% in 2009. Women accounted for 35.5% of all self-employed workers in 2009, up from 30.7% in 1991 and 26.3% in 1976 (Table 5.10).

Table 5.10
Self-employment trends among women and men, 1976 to 2009

Year	Self-employed women	Self-employed men	Self-employed women	Self-employed men	Women as a % of total self-employment
	thousands	thousands	percentage	percentage	
1976	311.6	873.4	8.6	14.2	26.3
1981	404.6	1,020.6	8.9	15.1	28.4
1986	492.0	1,164.0	9.6	16.9	29.7
1991	582.6	1,313.2	10.1	18.6	30.7
1996	744.8	1,426.8	12.2	19.5	34.3
2001	773.4	1,503.3	11.2	18.7	34.0
2002	814.7	1,499.7	11.4	18.3	35.2
2003	830.7	1,571.1	11.3	18.8	34.6
2004	838.9	1,614.5	11.2	19.0	34.2
2005	866.0	1,645.6	11.4	19.1	34.5
2006	876.6	1,621.4	11.3	18.6	35.1
2007	911.9	1,703.2	11.4	19.2	34.9
2008	909.9	1,719.7	11.2	19.1	34.6
2009	959.4	1,742.3	11.9	19.9	35.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

In an economic downturn, the number of self-employed tends to rise, and the number of employees declines. Some employees who lose their jobs and are unable to find others generate their own work and become self-employed. In 2009, a year of downturn for the labour market, the number of self-employed women rose 5.4% from the year before, while the number of employees fell 1.1%—virtually all in the private sector. Over the same period, the number of self-employed men rose 1.3%, a slower rate than that of women. The number of male employees dropped 3.7%, also virtually all in the private sector.

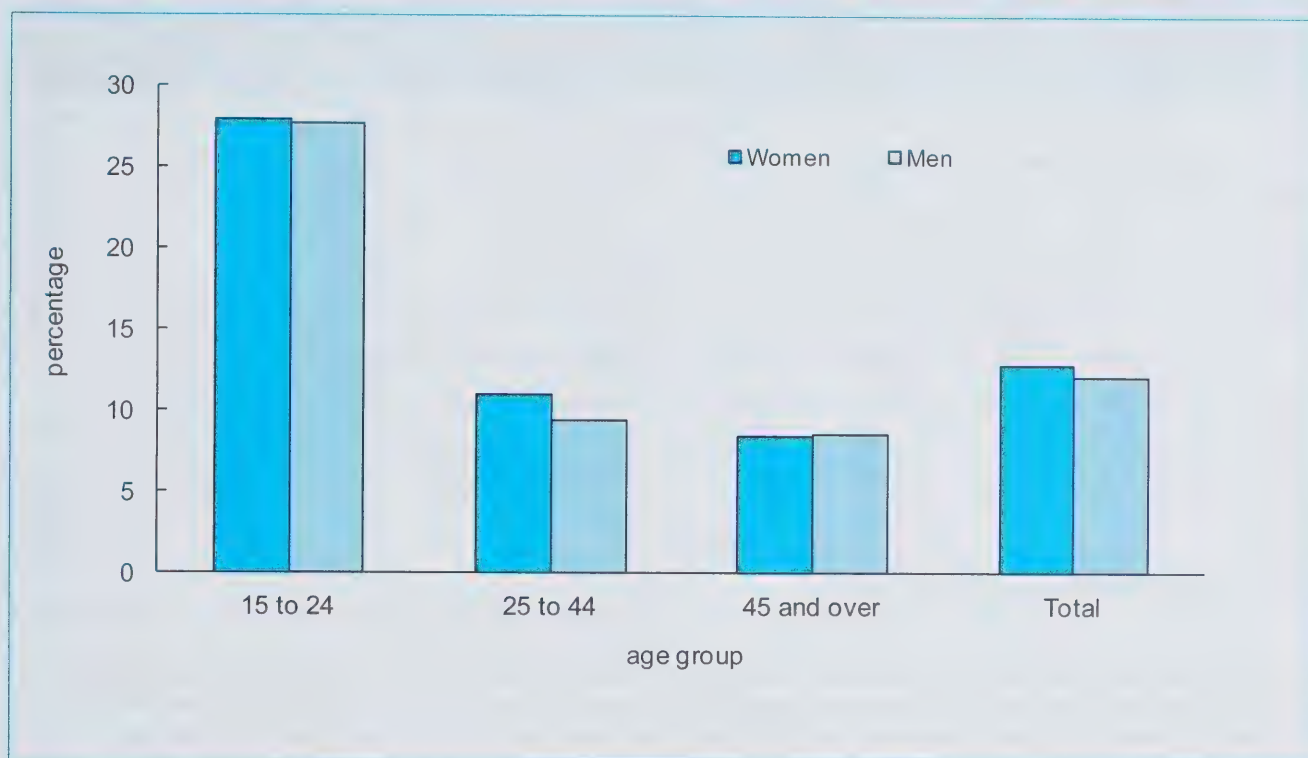
Young women and men are more likely to have temporary employment

Temporary employment is defined as working at a job that has a predetermined end date. In 2009, 12.9% of employed women had temporary employment, compared with 12.1% of men (Chart 5.4). This was down from the peak in 2005, when almost 14% of women and 12.5% of men who were employed worked in temporary jobs.

The proportion of those working in temporary jobs varies widely. In 2009, young women aged 15 to 24 were three times more likely to have temporary employment than women aged 45 and over—28.0% compared with 8.5%. This relationship held for men as well: younger men were substantially more likely to have temporary jobs than older men.

Chart 5.4

Percentage of employed women and men with temporary work, by age group, 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Multiple job-holding increases for women

Women make up a growing share of employees holding more than one job. By 2009, about 56% of multiple job holders were women. This is because the percentage of women holding more than one job continues to grow, while men's share remains relatively constant. In 1987, 4.0% of employed women held multiple jobs; by 2009, 6.2% of employed women did so. The corresponding share of men working at more than one job over this period rose from 4.2% to 4.4% (Table 5.11).

Table 5.11

Multiple job holders as a percentage of total employed women and men, by age group, 1987 to 2009

Year	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women as a % of all multiple job holders
	15 to 24		25 to 44		45 and over		Total		
	percentage								
1987	4.5	4.7	4.1	4.3	3.0	3.6	4.0	4.2	41.8
1991	5.6	4.9	5.1	4.8	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.6	46.9
1996	8.4	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5	3.9	5.8	4.6	51.1
2001	7.8	4.9	5.3	4.2	4.6	3.5	5.5	4.1	53.6
2002	7.8	5.2	5.7	4.7	5.1	3.8	5.8	4.4	53.4
2003	8.3	5.3	5.6	4.5	5.0	3.7	5.8	4.3	54.4
2004	8.4	5.4	5.8	4.6	5.0	3.5	5.9	4.3	54.8
2005	8.9	5.7	6.0	4.7	5.1	3.8	6.1	4.5	54.7
2006	8.2	5.1	5.8	4.8	5.2	4.1	6.0	4.5	53.9
2007	8.2	4.9	6.0	4.8	5.6	4.0	6.2	4.5	55.3
2008	7.7	4.7	6.1	4.7	5.4	4.0	6.1	4.4	55.3
2009	8.0	5.1	6.3	4.7	5.4	4.0	6.2	4.4	56.2

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

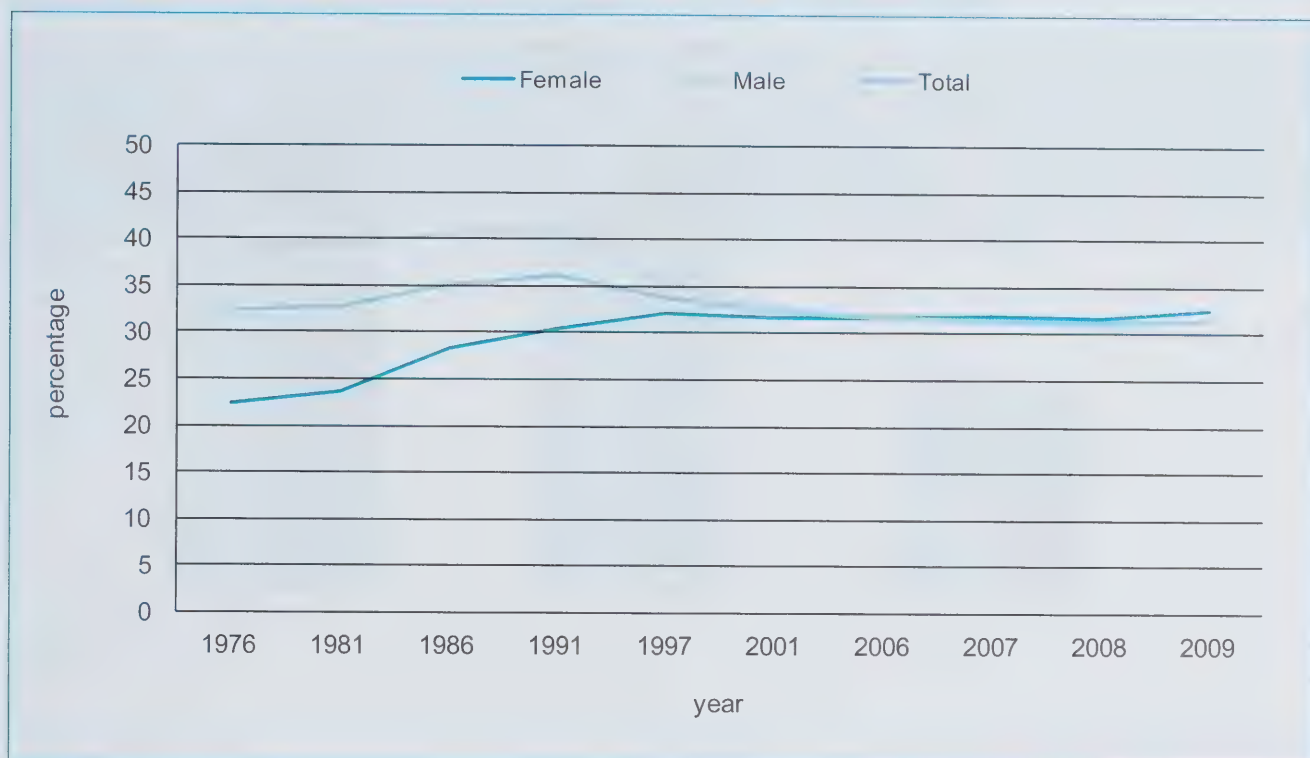
Young women had the highest incidence of multiple job holding. In 2009, 8.0% of employed women aged 15 to 24 were multiple job holders. This compares with 6.3% of women aged 25 to 44 and 5.4% of women aged 45 and older. At every age group, employed women were more likely than men to have more than one job.

Unionization rates higher for women than men

The percentage of women who are in unionized jobs has risen dramatically. In 1976, 22.3% of women were in unionized jobs; by 2009, this had increased to 32.6% (Chart 5.5). Men's unionization has decreased, from 39% in 1976 to 30.3% in 2009. As a result, unionization rates were slightly higher among women than men in 2009.

Chart 5.5

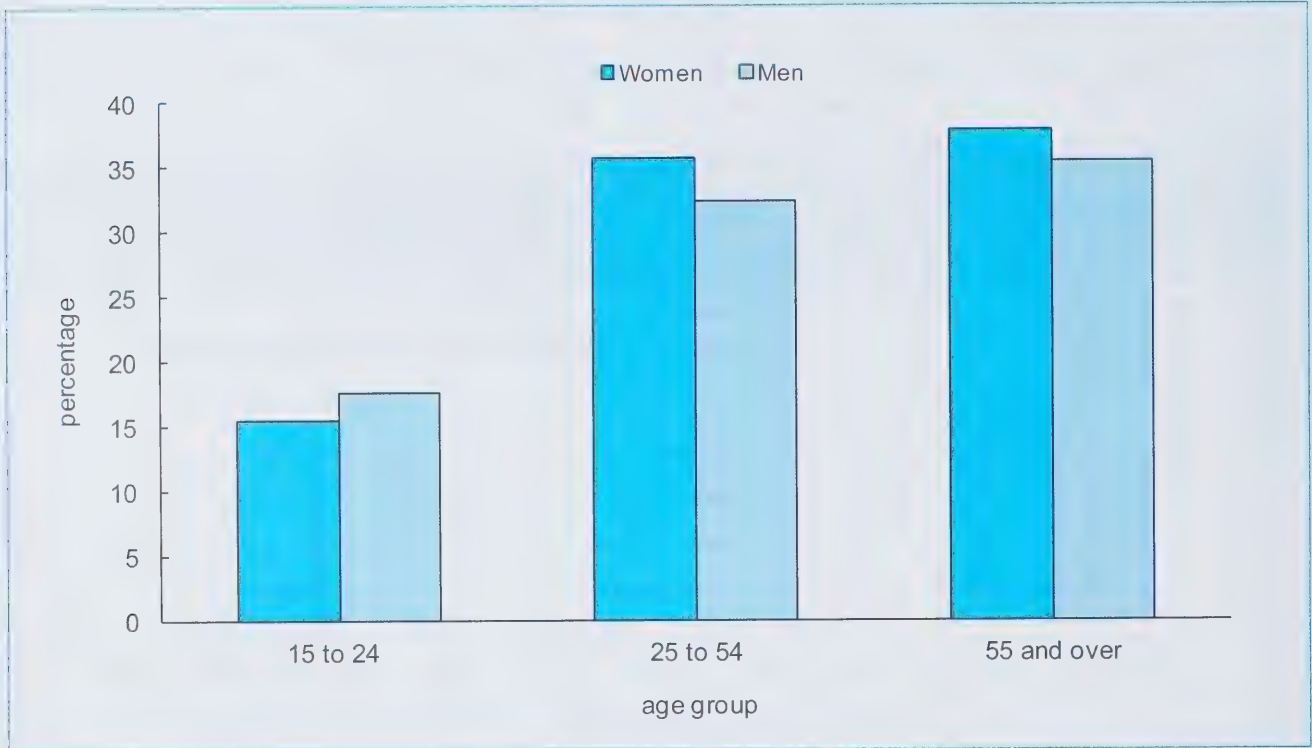
Percentage of female and male workers unionized, 1976 to 2009



Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey and Corporations and labour unions returns act (CALURA).

Unionization density varies both by sex and by age: it increases with age for both sexes (Chart 5.6). For example, while 15.4% of employed women aged 15 to 24 held unionized jobs, more than 35% of women in the older age groups were in unionized jobs. Interestingly, in the 15-to-24 age group, unionization was higher for men than women. However, in older age groups, women's unionization density exceeded men's.

Chart 5.6
Union density by age group and sex, 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Despite progress, women still concentrated in traditional female occupations

The majority of employed women continue to work in occupations in which they have been traditionally concentrated. In 2009, 67% of all employed women were working in teaching, nursing and related health occupations, clerical or other administrative positions, or sales and service occupations. This compared with 31% of employed men (Table 5.12).

Table 5.12
Distribution of employment by occupations, 1987, 1999 and 2009

Occupations	1987			1999			2009		
	Women	Men	Women as a % of total occupations	Women	Men	Women as a % of total occupations	Women	Men	Women as a % of total occupations
percentage									
Managerial									
Senior management	0.3	0.8	21.0	0.4	0.8	28.2	0.3	0.6	31.6
Other management	5.7	9.7	30.7	6.9	10.6	35.5	6.7	10.4	37.4
Total management	6.0	10.5	30.1	7.2	11.3	35.1	7.0	11.0	37.0
Professional									
Business and finance	1.9	2.3	38.3	3.1	2.7	49.3	3.6	3.2	51.2
Natural sciences/engineering/ mathematics	2.3	7.0	19.5	3.0	9.6	20.7	3.3	10.6	22.3
Social sciences/religion	4.3	2.0	61.4	5.8	2.4	67.7	7.7	2.7	72.5
Teaching	3.8	2.6	52.3	5.2	2.7	61.9	5.8	2.7	65.9
Doctors/dentists/other health	0.9	0.9	43.1	1.1	1.0	47.3	1.5	1.1	55.2
Nursing/therapy/other health related	8.3	0.9	87.1	8.1	1.1	86.3	9.1	1.2	87.1
Artistics/literary/recreational	2.7	2.1	48.4	3.4	2.4	54.1	3.7	2.9	54.4
Total professional	24.1	18.0	50.4	29.7	21.9	53.4	34.7	24.4	56.7
Clerical and administrative	29.7	7.9	73.9	24.6	6.8	75.4	23.2	6.9	75.5
Sales and services	30.0	18.4	55.2	29.4	18.6	57.3	28.9	20.1	56.9
Primary	2.3	7.2	19.7	1.9	5.9	21.6	1.3	4.9	19.5
Trades, transport and construction	2.1	28.9	5.2	2.0	26.1	6.0	2.0	26.3	6.4
Processing, manufacturing and utilities	5.8	9.1	32.4	5.2	9.3	32.2	2.9	6.3	30.1
Total occupations ¹	100.0	100.0	43.0	100.0	100.0	45.9	100.0	100.0	47.9
Total Employed (thousands)	5,307.7	7,025.3	...	6,609.6	7,797.2	...	8,076.2	8,772.7	

1. Includes occupations that are not classified.

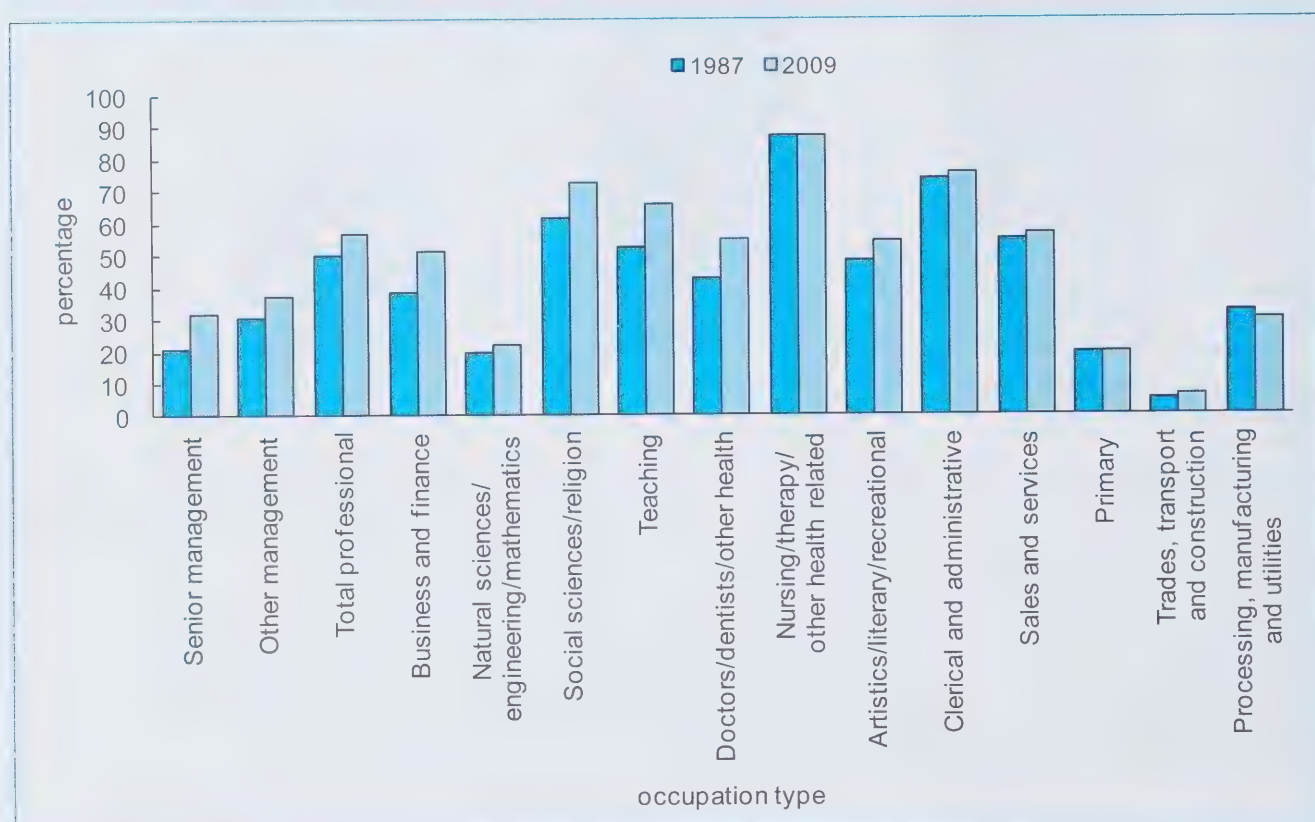
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

The proportion of women employed in traditionally female-dominated occupations, however, has declined slowly over the past two decades. In 2009, 67.0% of employed women were working in one of these areas, down from 71.8% in 1987.

Most of this decline since the late 1980s has been accounted for by falling percentages employed in clerical and related administrative jobs. In 2009, 23.2% of employed women had these types of jobs, compared with 29.7% in 1987 (Chart 5.7). In contrast, the share of women in teaching positions rose slightly, from 3.8% to 5.8%, over this period; the share of women working in nursing and related occupations increased from 8.3% to 9.1%, and the share of women in sales and service jobs slipped from 30.0% to 28.9%.

Women's share of total employment in these traditional occupational groups is still significant: in 2009, 87.1% of nurses and health-related therapists, 75.5% of clerks and other administrators, 65.9% of teachers and 56.9% of sales and service personnel were women.

Chart 5.7
Women employed as a percentage of all occupations, 1987 and 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Women have, however, increased their representation in several professional fields in recent years. For example, women comprised 51.2% of business and financial professionals in 2009, up from 38.3% in 1987. The share of women employed has gone up in diagnostic and treating positions in medicine and related health professions. In fact, women made up more than one-half (55.2%) of doctors, dentists and other health occupations in 2009, up from 43.1% in 1987. Similarly, 72.5% of professionals employed in social sciences or religion in 2009 were women, compared with 61.4% in 1987.

Women have also increased their share of total employment in managerial positions. In 2009, they comprised 37.0% of those employed in managerial positions, up from 30.1% in 1987. Among managers, however, women tend to be better represented among lower-level managers than among those at more senior levels. In 2009, women made up 31.6% of senior managers (up from 21.0% in 1987), but 37.4% of managers at other levels in 2009.

Women are also still a minority among professionals in the natural sciences, engineering and mathematics. In 2009, just 22.3% of professionals in these occupations were women, up marginally from 19.5% in 1987.

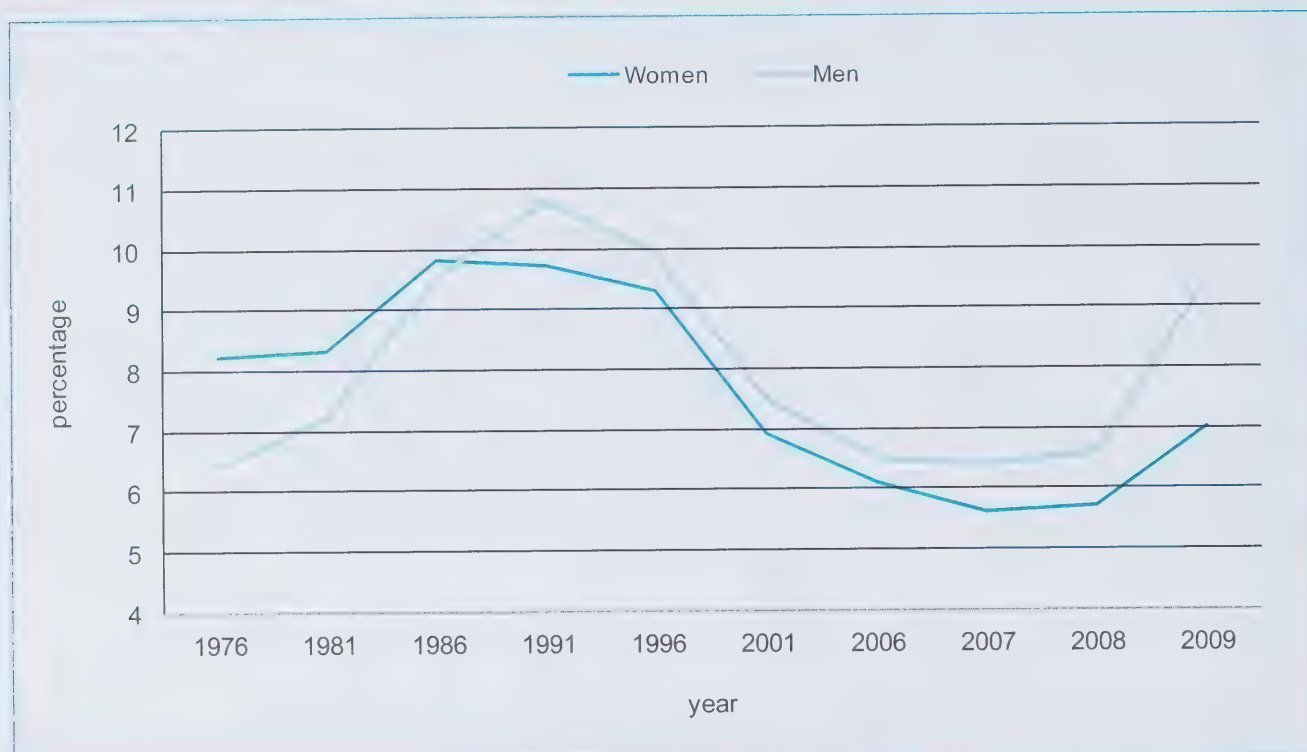
Relatively few women are employed in most goods-producing occupations, as was traditionally the case. In 2009, 30.1% of workers in manufacturing were women, as were 19.5% of those in primary industries and just 6.4% of those in transportation, trades, and construction work. The representation of women in manufacturing has edged down; in transportation, trades and construction-related occupations, however, women's representation has increased slightly since the late 1980s. In primary industries, the percentage of women employed was about the same in 2009 as it was in 1987.

Even in an economic slowdown, unemployment rate lower for women than men

The economic slowdown affected the labour market for both men and women. In 2009, the worst year of the labour market downturn, the number of unemployed women rose to 608,000, compared with 487,000 in 2008 and 476,000 in 2007. The female unemployment rate jumped to 7.0% in 2009, the highest since 2003 (Chart 5.8).

Despite the increase in unemployment, women were affected less than men during the 2009 downturn in the labour market. The industries hardest hit by employment losses in 2009 were those in the goods-producing sector, mainly manufacturing, construction and natural resources. Employment in these industries is male-dominated. Women, in contrast, are employed more than men in service industries where employment continued to grow, such as health care and social assistance, educational services and finance, insurance, real estate and leasing. This helped cushion the impact that the downturn had on women. While the level and rate of unemployment rose for women in 2009, the increase was less steep than that for men, for whom the unemployment rate reached 9.4%, the highest rate since 1996.

Chart 5.8
Unemployment rate for women and men, 1976 to 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Even though the unemployment rate rose for women during the labour market downturn, it remained lower than for men, as it has consistently been since the beginning of the 1990s. This contrasts with much of the period from 1976 to 1989, when women posted higher unemployment rates than men.

Among women, those aged 15 to 24 saw the largest increase in their unemployment rate, from 10.0% in 2007 and 2008 to 12.4% in 2009. This was more than twice the unemployment rate of women in the older cohorts—those aged 25 to 44 and 45 to 64 (Table 5.13).

Table 5.13
Unemployment rates of women and men, by age, 1976 to 2009

Year	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	15 to 24		25 to 44		45 to 64		15 and over	
	percentage							
1976	11.6	13.0	7.4	4.7	5.0	3.8	8.2	6.4
1981	11.7	13.7	7.5	5.5	5.2	4.4	8.3	7.2
1986	13.2	16.0	9.2	8.5	7.4	6.5	9.8	9.5
1991	12.9	18.5	9.3	10.2	8.0	7.5	9.7	10.8
1996	13.8	16.9	8.9	9.4	7.5	7.5	9.3	9.9
2001	11.1	14.5	6.3	6.7	5.4	5.6	6.9	7.5
2002	11.7	15.3	6.7	7.2	5.5	6.1	7.1	8.1
2003	11.8	15.3	6.8	6.9	5.5	6.2	7.2	7.9
2004	11.7	14.9	6.4	6.6	5.2	5.5	6.9	7.5
2005	10.6	14.2	6.0	6.1	5.2	5.3	6.5	7.0
2006	10.4	12.8	5.6	5.7	4.7	5.0	6.1	6.5
2007	10.0	12.3	5.0	5.7	4.4	4.9	5.6	6.4
2008	10.0	13.1	5.0	5.6	4.6	5.3	5.7	6.6
2009	12.4	18.0	6.4	8.4	5.6	7.6	7.0	9.4

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Although young women (those 15 to 24) have the highest unemployment rate among women, they have a lower unemployment rate than young men. During the recent labour market downturn, the unemployment rate for young women rose from 10.0% in 2008 to 12.4% in 2009; the rate for young men rose more sharply from 13.1% to 18.0% over the same period. Although the unemployment rate rose for both men and women aged 25 to 44 and 45 to 64, women's rates were a full two percentage points lower than men's.

Women in the Atlantic provinces and Quebec generally have higher unemployment rates than women in other provinces. However, the 2009 downturn pushed unemployment rates higher for women in all provinces. Young women (aged 15 to 24) in Ontario posted the second-highest unemployment rate (14.4%) in 2009, behind young women in Newfoundland and Labrador (16.0%). For women in other age groups, unemployment rates were also highest in Newfoundland and Labrador—11.2% for 25 to 44-year-olds and 13.1% for 45 to 64-year-olds.

In 2009, 12.6% of all women in the labour force in Newfoundland and Labrador were unemployed, the highest in Canada. The unemployment rate for women was 10.1% in Prince Edward Island, 7.4% in Nova Scotia and 7.5% in New Brunswick in 2009. At 6.9%, the unemployment rate of women in Quebec was below that for women in Ontario, 7.7%. In 2009, unemployment rates for women in the western provinces were the lowest in the country: in Manitoba, it was 5.0%; Saskatchewan, 4.2%; Alberta, 5.8%; and British Columbia, 6.5%. In all provinces in 2009, unemployment rates were lower for women than for men (Table 5.14).

Table 5.14
Unemployment rates of women and men, by age and province, 2009

Province	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	15 to 24		25 to 44		45 to 64		15 and over	
	percentage							
Canada	12.4	18.0	6.4	8.4	5.6	7.6	7.0	9.4
Newfoundland and Labrador	16.0	28.3	11.2	15.5	13.1	17.5	12.6	18.0
Prince Edward Island	13.2	21.7	8.3	12.7	10.3	12.3	10.1	13.8
Nova Scotia	13.0	21.9	6.5	10.2	6.1	8.1	7.4	11.0
New Brunswick	13.0	16.7	6.2	9.0	6.8	9.4	7.5	10.2
Quebec	12.3	18.1	5.7	9.1	6.1	7.9	6.9	9.9
Ontario	14.4	20.7	7.2	9.2	5.6	8.1	7.7	10.3
Manitoba	9.1	11.2	4.4	4.6	3.8	3.8	5.0	5.3
Saskatchewan	8.7	10.4	3.7	5.0	2.8	3.6	4.2	5.3
Alberta	10.4	13.9	5.5	6.1	4.1	5.7	5.8	7.2
British Columbia	9.6	17.0	6.3	7.2	5.6	7.3	6.5	8.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Reasons for unemployment vary

Unemployment occurs for several reasons. For example, in 2009, 45.6% of unemployed women lost their job or were laid off. At the same time, 23.7% of unemployed women were labour force re-entrants who had not worked in the past year, and another 9.7% were job market entrants—they had never been employed. Another 5.6% of unemployed women had left their last job to go to school, 2.6% had left because of personal or family responsibilities, and another 2.1% had left because of personal illness (Table 5.15).

Table 5.15
Unemployed women and men, by reason for leaving last job, 2009

Reason	Women		Men	
	thousands	%	thousands	%
Own illness/disability	12.7	2.1	15.5	1.7
Personal/family reasons	15.7	2.6	7.9	0.9
Going to school	34.0	5.6	40.7	4.5
Lost job/laid off	276.9	45.6	530.5	58.2
Retired	2.3	0.4	5.2	0.6
Other reasons	63.3	10.4	81.2	8.9
Had not worked in last year	144.2	23.7	170.7	18.7
Never worked	58.7	9.7	60.1	6.6
Total unemployed	607.9	100.0	912.0	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Although much of the labour market downturn occurred in 2009, among the unemployed, women were less likely than men to have lost their last job or been laid off—45.6% of unemployed women compared with 58.2% of unemployed men.

Unemployed women were more likely than men to have been either job market entrants or labour force re-entrants who had not worked in the previous year. In 2009, 9.7% of unemployed women were job market entrants, and 23.7% had not worked in the previous year. This contrasts with 6.6% of men who were job market entrants and 18.7% who were unemployed and had not worked in the previous year.

Unemployed women were also more likely than unemployed men to have left their last job because of personal or family responsibilities.

Immigrants and the labour market

In 2009, 51.0% of the total foreign-born female population was employed, compared with 60.6% of women born in Canada.

Women who were very recent immigrants—those who had been in the country 5 years or less—had the lowest employment rate, 49.1%. Women who had been in the country from 5 to 10 years, and those who had been in Canada more than 10 years—called 'established immigrants'—fared better, with employment rates of 56.3% and 50.3%, respectively.

Compared with immigrant men, immigrant women in 2009 posted lower employment rates, irrespective of the length of time spent in the country. Women born in Canada also had a lower employment rate, 60.6%, than men born in Canada (66.4%).

The labour market downturn had a greater impact on unemployment rates for immigrant women than for Canadian-born women. In 2009, the female immigrant unemployment rate reached 9.6%, up from 7.4% in 2008: the rate for women born in Canada was 6.3% in 2009, up from 5.2% in 2008.

Women who were very recent immigrants posted the highest unemployment rate, 15.9% in 2009, followed by recent immigrants, 12.6%, and established immigrants, 7.5%. The unemployment rate for the total female immigrant population was 9.6% in 2009, lower than that for male immigrants (10.5%). However, among very recent immigrants, the female unemployment rate (15.9%) was higher than the male unemployment rate (14.3%) (Table 5.16).

Table 5.16

Employment, employment rate and unemployment rate for women and men, by immigration status, 2006 to 2009

Immigration status and year		Women aged 15 and over			Men aged 15 and over			Women as a % of total employment
		Employment	Employ- ment rate	Unemploy- ment rate	Employment	Employ- ment rate	Unemploy- ment rate	
		thousands	%	%	thousands	%	%	
Total	2006	7,757.2	58.3	6.1	8,727.1	67.7	6.5	47.1
	2007	7,977.5	59.1	5.6	8,888.9	68.0	6.4	47.3
	2008	8,104.5	59.3	5.7	9,021.3	68.1	6.6	47.3
	2009	8,076.2	58.3	7.0	8,772.7	65.2	9.4	47.9
Total Landed immigrants	2006	1,523.4	51.2	7.5	1,795.5	64.4	6.4	45.9
	2007	1,593.2	51.9	7.4	1,842.9	64.5	6.7	46.4
	2008	1,606.6	51.5	7.4	1,870.0	64.4	6.7	46.2
	2009	1,617.6	51.0	9.6	1,801.4	61.4	10.5	47.3
Very recent immigrants, 5 years or less	2006	201.4	48.2	14.2	256.1	67.6	10.9	44.0
	2007	203.4	48.0	13.3	266.0	67.7	10.7	43.3
	2008	220.7	49.4	14.1	286.2	70.8	9.9	43.5
	2009	213.4	49.1	15.9	259.0	65.7	14.3	45.2
Recent immigrants, 5 to 10 years	2006	239.2	57.3	10.3	289.8	73.8	7.4	45.2
	2007	256.7	59.5	8.5	288.6	73.8	8.0	47.1
	2008	246.8	56.3	9.5	303.0	73.2	8.2	44.9
	2009	253.2	56.3	12.6	296.9	68.5	13.4	46.0
Established immigrants, 10 plus years	2006	1,082.8	50.6	5.5	1,249.6	62.0	5.2	46.4
	2007	1,133.1	51.2	6.0	1,288.3	62.1	5.5	46.8
	2008	1,139.1	51.0	5.6	1,280.7	61.4	5.7	47.1
	2009	1,151.0	50.3	7.5	1,245.6	59.2	8.9	48.0
Non-landed immigrants	2006	109.6	48.0	8.6	143.4	62.6	6.4	43.3
	2007	112.0	49.8	7.2	134.1	61.7	7.8	45.5
	2008	116.4	50.7	7.5	142.2	63.7	7.3	45.0
	2009	124.5	53.7	7.8	148.9	63.4	8.8	45.5
Born in Canada	2006	6,124.1	60.6	5.6	6,788.2	68.8	6.5	47.4
	2007	6,272.3	61.5	5.1	6,911.9	69.2	6.2	47.6
	2008	6,381.5	61.8	5.2	7,009.1	69.2	6.5	47.7
	2009	6,334.1	60.6	6.3	6,822.3	66.4	9.1	48.1

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

The Aboriginal population and the labour market

In 2009, 53.7% of the female Aboriginal population⁸⁸ was employed, compared with 60.6% of their male counterparts. In 2009, the Aboriginal women's rate fell 1.1 percentage points from 54.8% the year before. Aboriginal men saw a steeper decline, from 66.1% to 60.6% over the same period.

The employment rate for Aboriginal women, 53.7%, was less than that of non-Aboriginal women, 58.4%, in 2009. Among Aboriginal women, the employment rate for the Métis was 58.2%, the same as in 2007, but down from 59.2% in 2008. Conversely, women who were North American Indian saw their employment rate decline from 50.9% in 2007 to 49.7% in 2009.

The decline in employment in 2009 lifted the female Aboriginal unemployment rate to 12.7% from 10.0% in 2007 and 10.4% in 2008. Despite this increase, the unemployment rate for Aboriginal women was below that of Aboriginal men, 15.1%, in 2009.

The female Aboriginal unemployment rate in 2009, 12.7%, was nearly twice that of non-Aboriginal women, 6.9% (Table 5.17).

Table 5.17

Employment, employment rate and unemployment rate by Aboriginal identity, 2007 to 2009

Aboriginal Identity and year		Women aged 15 and over			Men aged 15 and over			Women as a % of total employment
		Employment	Employment rate	Unemployment rate	Employment	Employment rate	Unemployment rate	
		thousands		%	thousands		%	
Total	2007	7,979.7	59.2	5.6	8,891.4	68.1	6.4	47.3
	2008	8,108.3	59.3	5.7	9,024.1	68.1	6.5	47.3
	2009	8,082.0	58.3	7.0	8,776.4	65.3	9.4	47.9
Non-Aboriginal	2007	7,831.3	59.3	5.5	8,731.4	68.1	6.3	47.3
	2008	7,956.5	59.4	5.6	8,855.5	68.1	6.5	47.3
	2009	7,931.0	58.4	6.9	8,618.8	65.4	9.3	47.9
Aboriginal	2007	148.5	54.4	10.0	160.0	63.9	11.1	48.1
	2008	151.8	54.8	10.4	168.6	66.1	10.3	47.4
	2009	151.0	53.7	12.7	157.6	60.6	15.1	48.9
North American Indian	2007	74.2	50.9	12.1	74.7	60.8	12.5	49.8
	2008	75.1	51.0	12.7	77.3	61.6	13.0	49.3
	2009	74.0	49.7	15.0	71.5	55.9	18.0	50.9
Métis	2007	70.8	58.2	8.0	81.8	67.0	9.6	46.4
	2008	73.5	59.2	7.9	87.7	70.5	7.9	45.6
	2009	74.1	58.2	10.3	83.7	65.5	12.3	47.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Within the Aboriginal identity population, North American Indians had the highest unemployment rates. For example, in 2009 North American Indian women had an unemployment rate of 15.0%, and their male counterparts had an unemployment rate of 18.0% that same year—about twice that of their non-Aboriginal counterparts. Among Métis, the unemployment rates were slightly lower, 10.3% for women and 12.3% for men.

88. Data for the Aboriginal population excludes those living on reserves or in the Territories.

Employment Insurance eligibility up for women and men in 2009

Of the unemployed individuals who had contributed to the Employment Insurance (EI) program and had a valid job separation in 2009, 558,000, or 65.1%, were men. In 2009, 87.3% of male EI contributors were eligible for regular benefits, up from 84.6% in 2008. Of the 299,000 unemployed women who were contributors with a valid job separation, 84.3% were eligible for EI benefits in 2009, up from 77.8% a year earlier (data not shown).

Compared with men, a higher share of women had quit their job for a reason that disqualified them from collecting regular benefits, and a slightly higher share of women than men had not accumulated enough insurable hours.

Nearly one-third of unemployed women (32.5%) did not contribute to EI, compared with 28.0% of their male counterparts. The proportion of women was slightly higher than that of men, mainly because women were less likely to have had paid employment in the previous 12 months.

In 2009, 76.2% of all recent mothers (with a child aged 12 months or less) had insurable employment; among these insured mothers, 88.0% were receiving maternity or parental benefits. Both rates were essentially unchanged from 2008 (77.0% and 88.1%, respectively). Conversely, the share of recent fathers taking parental leave in 2009 was 30.1%, up slightly from 28.2% in 2008.

Employment Insurance recipients

The number of women receiving Employment Insurance (EI) income benefits increased in 2009 to a monthly average of about 483,000 recipients, up from about 392,000 per month in 2008. The number of men receiving income benefits was higher than for women in 2009, with about 574,000 men per month receiving EI income benefits.

The type of income benefits received differs by sex. For example, about 734,000 people received regular income benefits each month in 2009. About 36% of those receiving these regular income benefits were women, as were 31.5% of those receiving training benefits and 29.7% of those receiving work-sharing benefits. Conversely, women made up the lion's share of those receiving parental benefits. For example, about 114,000 individuals received parental income benefits each month in 2009—of these, 92.5% (105,000) were women. Women's share of sickness benefits was also higher than men's. In 2009, about 62,000 people received EI sickness benefits each month, and about 57.5% of those receiving them were women (Box Table 5.1).

Box Table 5.1

Employment Insurance program, income beneficiaries by type of income benefit for women and men, 1997 to 2009

Income benefit type	1997	2001	2006	2007	2008	2009
average number of monthly claimants						
Total income benefits¹	775,866	735,672	761,747	733,770	750,343	1,056,316
Women	374,418	357,557	404,292	385,264	392,229	482,610
Men	401,448	378,113	357,453	348,508	358,114	573,706
Regular benefits	605,112	521,363	494,043	479,469	486,326	733,984
Women	255,198	201,862	197,727	191,812	192,624	263,668
Men	349,912	319,501	296,316	287,658	293,703	470,319
Training benefits	34,052	25,691	22,446	22,308	22,991	33,233
Women	13,435	8,971	7,302	6,717	6,538	10,470
Men	20,618	16,720	15,146	15,589	16,452	22,764
Job creation benefits	2,647	1,090	582	549	439	512
Women	1,224	498	321	313	251	278
Men	1,426	592	261	233	192	232
Self-employment benefits	4,762	2,562	2,004	1,815	1,635	2,185
Women	1,768	927	774	698	628	750
Men	2,997	1,635	1,231	1,118	1,010	1,435
Sickness benefits	35,275	48,606	59,228	59,583	60,984	62,174
Women	21,342	28,598	35,185	35,448	35,983	35,778
Men	13,932	20,005	24,042	24,136	25,001	26,398
Maternity benefits	49,341	55,090	46,912	47,064	48,145	48,788
Women	49,340	55,090	46,911	47,064	48,144	48,788
Fishing benefits	11,826	12,462	12,808	12,562	12,595	12,118
Women	1,452	2,072	2,419	2,447	2,482	2,318
Men	10,375	10,391	10,390	10,114	10,112	9,801
Work sharing benefits	1,685	7,806	1,791	2,556	4,755	48,343
Women	670	3,057	549	825	1,456	14,349
Men	1,016	4,753	1,243	1,732	3,302	33,996
Adoption benefits	341	834	1,209	1,138	1,092	1,085
Women	312	738	1,048	995	938	922
Men	28	96	162	142	152	164
Parental benefits	30,829	60,174	120,718	106,707	111,354	113,868
Women	29,681	55,751	112,056	98,932	103,167	105,272
Men	1,147	4,426	8,663	7,778	8,186	8,594

1. The number of beneficiaries receiving total income benefits excludes employment insurance claimants receiving employment and support measures benefits.

Note: Compassionate care benefits were created as of January 2004, however data are too small to report.

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 276-0001.

Chapter 6

Economic Well-being

by Cara Williams

The many determinants of economic well-being

Women's economic well-being has many contributing factors, principally current income. However, income alone may not provide a full picture of women's current and future economic well-being.

Other determinants of families' and individuals' economic well-being, such as assets, debts and net worth, must be considered, since they not only provide information about future well-being, they also may provide insight about the financial stability of the household.

Retirement savings are an important indicator of future well-being. Understanding the types of pension plans and measuring contributions allows for a more complete picture of financial preparedness.

Home ownership and shelter affordability are also factors of economic well-being. Home ownership has been traditionally related to economic well-being as it may be related to housing stability; a house can also be liquidated if necessary. Households, or individuals, who spend a large proportion of their income on shelter may face housing insecurity.

Finally, readers should be aware that when income, assets, debts and net worth data are analysed by family type, no assumptions can be made about the distribution of benefits within the household.⁸⁹

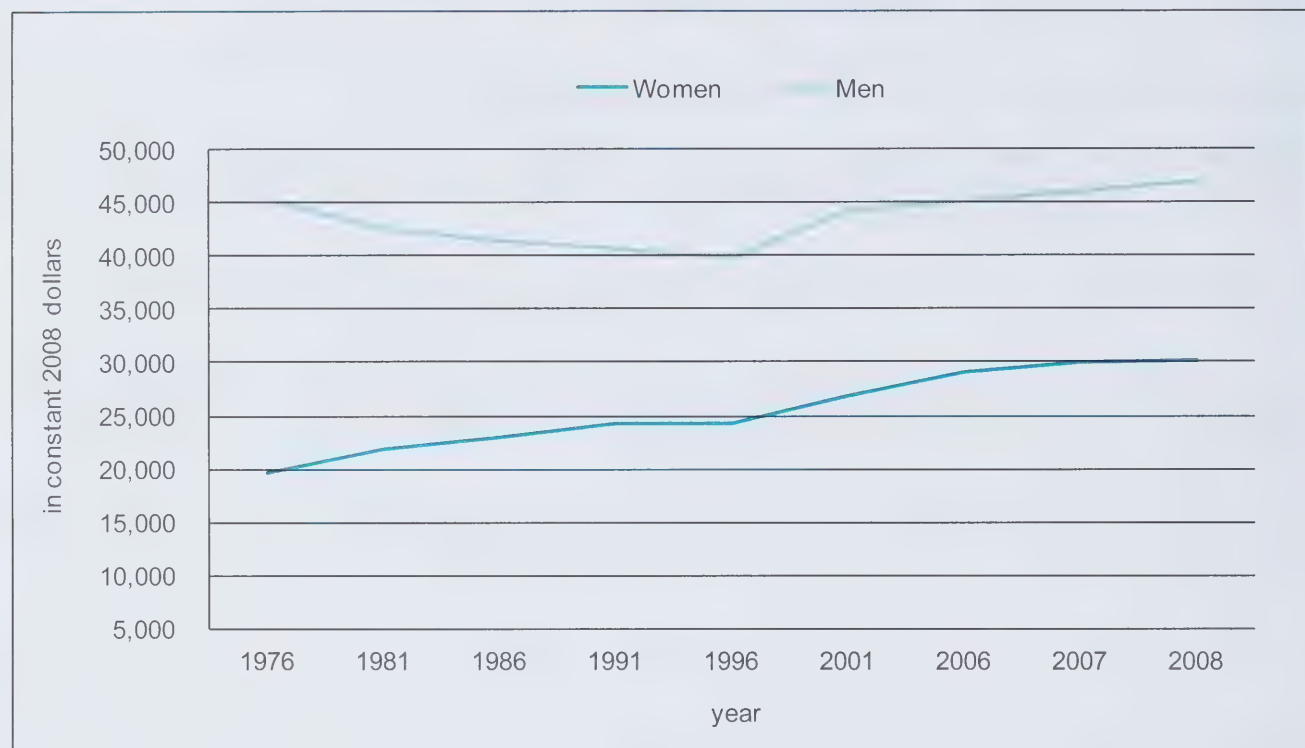
89. Although it is not possible to determine how income is divided within the household, the 2009 Canadian Survey of Financial Capability provides some information about the household financial management. In 2009, more than 75% of women in couple families stated that they were either solely responsible for the management of household income and investment decisions, or that they shared these responsibilities with their spouse and about 15% stated that their spouse was responsible for the household financial management.

Income

Canadian women earned an average total income⁹⁰ of \$30,100 in 2008, up 13% from \$26,300 in 2000.⁹¹ That 13% growth surpassed the 7% growth for men over this period, but men continued to have higher average incomes. In 2008, the average total income for men was \$47,000.

Chart 6.1

Average total income of women and men, 1976 to 2008



Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0407.

90. Total income includes income from all sources including wages, salaries, pensions, investments and government transfers.

91. All income figures are presented in 2008 constant dollars.

Income by province

Women in Alberta and Ontario had the highest average total income at \$34,000 and \$31,600, respectively (Table 6.1). In 2008, the lowest average total incomes were earned by women in Newfoundland and Labrador, \$24,000, and in New Brunswick, \$24,600.

Table 6.1
Average total income of women and men, by province, 2008

Province	Women	Men
	dollars	
Canada	30,100	47,000
Newfoundland and Labrador	24,000	41,900
Prince Edward Island	27,900	36,000
Nova Scotia	25,200	41,000
New Brunswick	24,600	37,900
Quebec	28,500	39,600
Ontario	31,600	48,600
Manitoba	27,900	45,400
Saskatchewan	29,800	47,900
Alberta	34,000	61,700
British Columbia	29,100	47,600

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0407.

Women's average total income was lower than men's in every province, but in two provinces the gap was more pronounced. In Alberta, women's total incomes were 55% of men's in 2008 (\$34,000 for women and \$61,700 for men); in Newfoundland and Labrador, women's incomes were 57% of men's. The gap was smallest in Prince Edward Island and Quebec. In Prince Edward Island, women's incomes were 78% of men's; in Quebec they were 72% of men's.

Income by age group

Women's and men's average incomes vary by age, but each follows the same general pattern. Incomes are lowest for the youngest age group, increase up to age 54, and then decline in the older age groups. Indeed, both women's and men's incomes were highest between the ages of 45 and 54. Average total income for women in this age group was \$40,900 in 2008. Women aged 35 to 44 had the next highest average total income at \$36,300 (Table 6.2). Women aged 16 to 19 had the lowest average total income, \$7,100.

Table 6.2
Average total income of women and men, by age group, 2008

Age group	Women	Men
	dollars	dollars
Total age 16 and over	30,100	47,000
16 to 19	7,100	7,800
20 to 24	15,100	21,100
25 to 34	32,500	43,200
35 to 44	36,300	59,900
45 to 54	40,900	63,700
55 to 64	29,400	53,400
65 and over	24,800	38,100

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0407.

In every age group women's average total income was lower than men's, but the gap was smallest in the youngest age range: women between 16 and 19 had incomes of about 90% of men in the same age group. The gap was largest for those aged 55 to 64: women's average total income was 55% of men's—\$29,400 compared with \$53,400. For the other age groups, the ratio of women's incomes to men's ranged from 75% for those aged 20 to 24 and those age 65 years and older to 61% for those aged 35 to 44.

Income by family type

The income situation for women and men varies depending on their family status. Lone-parent families have the lowest average total incomes. In 2008, female lone-parent families had the lowest average total income of all family types, \$42,300, or 70% of the \$60,400 earned by male lone-parent families (Table 6.3). While lone-parent families had the lowest incomes of all family types, their incomes have been rising, and the gap between female and male lone-parent families has been narrowing. For example, from 1998 to 2008, real average total incomes of female lone-parent families grew 51%; those of lone-parent families headed by men grew 13%. In other words, female lone-parent families had incomes worth 53% of those of male lone-parent families in 1998; by 2008 this figure was 70%.

Table 6.3
Average total income by family type, select years, 1976 to 2008

Year	Non-elderly families ¹						Elderly families ³
	Married couples	Two-parent families with children	Married couples with other relatives ²	Female lone-parent	Male lone-parent	Other non-elderly families	
constant 2008 dollars							
1976	67,400	77,400	100,400	28,000	53,300	52,800	42,300
1981	69,700	75,700	100,800	30,600	57,100	58,600	45,400
1986	68,800	77,600	100,700	29,200	49,800	56,600	49,300
1991	70,500	78,800	97,900	29,700	51,200	57,100	52,200
1996	70,400	78,500	98,700	29,200	46,000	50,300	50,700
1998	75,900	84,800	99,500	30,900	48,800	46,600	49,900
2001	80,700	91,400	106,700	35,300	51,300	52,000	52,500
2006	83,300	95,200	116,700	39,800	65,000	55,200	56,100
2007	85,500	99,300	119,400	40,800	60,300	59,400	59,700
2008	86,000	100,200	127,800	42,300	60,400	59,000	59,400

1. Includes families with major income earner less than 65 years of age.

2. Includes families with children aged 18 and older and/or other relatives.

3. Includes families with major income earner 65 years of age or older.

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0410.

The groups with highest average total incomes in 2008 were two-parent families with children, at \$100,200, and married couples living with other relatives or children aged 18 and older, at \$127,800. Married couples with children have seen their real average total income rise each year since 1993, except 2005. Married couples with older children or other relatives living in the household have seen their incomes rise each year since 2003.

Elderly families—those in which the major income earner was 65 years of age or older—also saw growing average total income. In the 10 years from 1998 to 2008, elderly families saw their real total incomes grow from \$49,900 to \$59,400, an increase of about 16%.

Income of unattached individuals

Unattached individuals can be divided into those younger than 65 years of age, and those 65 and older. In both groups, the average total income of unattached individuals is lower than that of families, and women's average total incomes are lower than men's.

For example, in 2008, unattached women between 16 and 64 had average total incomes equivalent to almost 80% of their male counterparts—\$35,000 compared with \$42,100 (Table 6.4). Unattached women 65 and older had an average income about \$4,000 lower than women younger than 65, and their incomes were also lower than their male counterparts—\$29,500 compared with \$37,500.

Table 6.4

Average total income of unattached individuals, by sex, select years, 1976 to 2008

Year	Unattached individuals 16 to 64		Unattached individuals 65 and older	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
	constant 2008 dollars			
1976	27,500	36,500	15,900	24,400
1981	29,600	39,800	20,800	25,600
1986	29,600	36,400	21,900	24,100
1991	28,400	34,000	23,800	27,100
1996	27,400	32,900	24,300	31,500
1998	27,300	33,700	25,500	32,500
2001	30,200	37,500	27,200	31,800
2006	32,400	41,100	29,800	33,900
2007	34,000	41,100	29,400	36,900
2008	33,500	42,100	29,500	37,500

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0403.

Like families, unattached individuals experienced real income growth from 1998 to 2008. Unattached women under 65 saw real income growth of about 23%, compared with about 25% among unattached men in the same age group. For unattached women and men aged 65 and older, total real income grew about 15%.

Sources of income

Wages, salaries and net income from self-employment make up the lion's share of income for most Canadian families and individuals younger than 65. In 2008, about 70% of women's income came from employment; about 17% came from government—including 3.3% from Old Age Security, 4.0% from Canada/Quebec Pension Plan benefits⁹², and 3.0% from child tax benefits—4.3% came from investment income; and 6.3% came from private retirement income (Table 6.5).

Table 6.5
Composition of income for women and men with income, 2008

Income source	Women		Men	
	dollars	%	dollars	%
Wages and salaries	19,600	65.1	33,800	71.9
Net income from self-employment	1,400	4.7	3,500	7.4
Total employment income	21,000	69.8	37,300	79.4
Investment income	1,300	4.3	1,800	3.8
Retirement income	1,900	6.3	3,300	7.0
Other income	900	3.0	900	1.9
Income from government transfers				
Old Age Security	1,000	3.3	800	1.7
Guaranteed Income Supplement/Spouse's Allowance	400	1.3	200	0.4
Canada/Quebec Pension Plan Benefits	1,200	4.0	1,400	3.0
Social assistance	500	1.7	200	0.4
Employment Insurance Benefits	600	2.0	500	1.1
Child tax benefits	900	3.0	100	0.2
Workers Compensation Benefits	200	0.7	300	0.6
GST/HST credit	100	0.3	100	0.2
Provincial/territorial tax credits	100	0.3	100	0.2
Total government transfers	5,000	16.6	3,700	7.9
Total	30,100	100.0	47,000	100.0

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics.

The composition of women's earnings differed from men's. For example, 70% of women's total income came from employment, compared with 79% of men's. In dollar terms, women received about \$21,000 in employment income; men received just over \$37,000. Additionally, women received about 17% of their income from government; men received about 8% of their income from government. In dollar terms, in 2008, women received about \$1,300 more in transfer payments—an average of about \$5,000 per year; men received about \$3,700.

92. More information on the composition of income for senior women can be found in the forthcoming chapter on senior women.

Composition of income by family type

Wages and salaries are the largest source of income for non-elderly families. For example, among couples with children, wages and salaries made up about 81% of total income in 2008. Among couples without children in the household, wages and salaries made up 76% of income. Among these family types, government transfers accounted for between 5% and 6% of income (Table 6.6). Investment income accounted for less than 3% of total income for couples with children younger than 18 in the household.

Table 6.6
Composition of family income, by family structure, 2008

Income source	Non-elderly families ¹						Elderly families ³
	Lone parent with at least one child						
	Two-parent families	Married couples	Other non-elderly families				
	Married couples	with children	with other relatives ²	Female lone-parent	Male lone-parent		
	percentage						
Wages and salaries	76.1	80.9	82.9	63.5	79.9	80.1	9.7
Net income from self-employment	6.8	7.7	6.8 ^E	2.6 ^E	F	5.9 ^E	3.6
Investment income	4.0	3.0	2.9	1.0 ^E	F	F	11.0
Retirement income	6.2	0.4 ^E	2.5	F	F	F	32.6
Total government transfers	5.1	6.4	3.0	22.9 ^E	8.6	7.5 ^E	39.0
Other income	1.9	1.6	1.9	9.6	F	3.8 ^E	4.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total income (\$)	86,000	100,200	127,800	42,300	60,400	59,000	59,400

1. Includes families with major income earner less than age 65.

2. Includes families with children aged 18 and over and/or other relatives.

3. Includes families with the major income earner is aged 65 and over.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics.

Wages and salaries also made up the largest share of income for lone-parent families: however, there were differences between lone-parent mother and lone-parent father families. In 2008, wages and salaries made up 64% of total income for lone-parent mother families, and about 80% for lone-parent father families. Additionally, lone-parent mothers' share of income from government transfers, 23%, was higher than that of lone-parent fathers, 9%. In 2008, lone-parent mothers received approximately \$9,600 from transfer payments; lone-parent fathers received about \$5,300.

Earnings

Earnings are the monies received from paid work in the labour market. Women continue to have lower average annual earnings than men. In 2008, women earned \$30,200 annually—or about 65% of the approximately \$46,900 that men earned (Table 6.7). One reason for this is that women are less likely to work full-time than are men.

Table 6.7

Average annual earnings of women and men, in 2008 constant dollars, by employment status, 1976 to 2008

Year	All earners			Full-time, full-year			Other workers		
	Women dollars	Men dollars	Earnings ratio %	Women dollars	Men dollars	Earnings ratio %	Women dollars	Men dollars	Earnings ratio %
1976	21,100	45,100	46.8	34,100	57,300	59.4	12,200	23,400	52.2
1981	22,200	41,700	53.2	33,700	53,000	63.5	12,400	20,300	61.1
1986	23,300	40,700	57.2	34,400	52,500	65.6	13,000	17,800	72.8
1991	24,000	40,000	60.1	36,700	53,400	68.7	11,900	17,200	69.1
1996	25,400	40,000	63.6	38,600	53,000	72.8	13,000	16,800	77.1
1998	26,500	42,300	62.8	40,500	56,300	71.9	13,600	18,700	72.7
2001	27,600	44,400	62.1	40,600	58,100	69.9	15,200	19,400	78.4
2006	29,000	44,800	64.7	43,200	60,000	71.9	14,900	19,200	77.4
2007	29,900	45,500	65.7	44,100	61,700	71.4	15,400	19,300	79.7
2008	30,200	46,900	64.5	44,700	62,600	71.3	15,200	20,000	75.7

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0102.

Among those working full-time, full-year, the ratio of women's earning to men's increased (or the earnings gap decreased) compared with all workers. However, when women and men working full-time, full-year are compared, women's earnings remain at about 71% of men's, a ratio that has fluctuated between 70% and 72% since 1999.

Part of the difference in women's and men's earnings is still related to hours worked: even among full-time workers, women work fewer hours than their male counterparts. For this reason, some research has proposed examining average hourly income as a more accurate measure for comparing women and men (see text box: The gender pay gap revisited).

Earnings and age

The earnings of women increase in the prime income-earning years—up to age 54—then they decline. In 2008, average annual earnings for women aged 16 to 24 who were working full-time, full-year were \$23,100. Earnings were highest, \$52,800, for women aged 45 to 54 (Table 6.8). Women working full-year, full-time aged 55 and older had average annual earnings of \$42,500.

Table 6.8

Average annual earnings of women and men employed full-year, full-time, by age group and marital status, 2008

Age group	Single	Married ¹	Other ²	Total
16 to 24	dollars			
Women	23,800	21,400	x	23,100
Men	31,100	35,200	x	31,700
	percentage			
Earnings ratio	76.7	60.9	..	72.7
25 to 34	dollars			
Women	39,400	40,000	35,000	39,600
Men	46,900	54,500	51,400	51,400
	percentage			
Earnings ratio	84.1	73.5	68.0	77.0
35 to 44	dollars			
Women	47,300	45,300	41,000	45,100
Men	60,000	72,100	60,200	69,100
	percentage			
Earnings ratio	79.0	62.9	68.0	65.4
45 to 54	dollars			
Women	54,300	52,300	53,800	52,800
Men	50,300	74,200	56,300	69,500
	percentage			
Earnings ratio	107.8	70.5	95.6	75.9
55 and over	dollars			
Women	43,700	42,000	43,600	42,500
Men	47,600	68,800	54,500	65,900
	percentage			
Earnings ratio	91.9	61.1	80.1	64.5
Total aged 16 and over	dollars			
Women	40,500	45,500	46,500	44,700
Men	46,900	68,500	56,500	62,600
	percentage			
Earnings ratio	86.4	66.5	82.4	71.3

1. Includes common-law relationships.

2. Includes separated/divorced and widowed.

Note: Average annual earnings exclude Canadians with no earnings.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics.

The ratio of women's earnings to men's was highest for those in the 25-to-34 and 45-to-54 age groups. For example, women aged 25 to 34 working full-year, full-time earned about 77% of what men in that age group earned. Women aged 45 to 54 earned about 76% of what men in the same age group earned.

Earnings and marital status

The variation between the earnings of married and single women is generally slight. For example, single never-married women aged 45 to 54 posted average earnings in 2008 of \$54,300 (Table 6.8): married women averaged \$52,300 (**see also text box: Earnings of women with and without children**). However, the same cannot be said for men: the difference between single and married men was greater. For example, single, never-married men aged 45 to 54 who worked full-year, full-time had average annual earnings in 2008 of \$50,300; their married counterparts averaged \$74,200. Interestingly, when comparing earnings between women and men, earnings are closest for the single never-married men and women.

Earnings and education

Average annual earnings for both women and men rise with their level of education. However, for women, the education premium was greater than for men. For example, women working full-year, full-time with less than a Grade 9 education earned an average \$20,800, less than 35% of what women with a university degree earned (\$62,800). In comparison, men with less than Grade 9 education earned \$40,400, about 44% of the \$91,800 earned by men with a university degree (Table 6.9).

Table 6.9

Average annual earnings of women and men employed full-year, full-time, by educational attainment, 2008

Level of education	Women	Men	Earnings ratio
	dollars		%
Less than grade 9	20,800	40,400	51.5
Some secondary school	28,600	43,600	65.6
Graduated high school	35,400	50,300	70.4
Some postsecondary	36,400	50,100	72.6
Postsecondary certificate or diploma	41,100	57,700	71.2
University degree	62,800	91,800	68.3
Total	44,700	62,600	71.3

Note: Average annual earnings exclude Canadians with no earnings.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics.

Men working full-year, full-time earned more than women with the equivalent level of education. At the lowest level of education—less than Grade 9—women's earnings were about 51% of those of men with the same level of education. While the gap narrowed for those with higher levels of education, women working full-year, full-time with a university degree earned about 30% less than equally educated men.

Earnings and occupation

Both women and men working in professional and management occupations earn more than those in other occupations.⁹³ For example, in 2008 earnings for women working full-time were highest for those in medicine and professional health occupations, \$73,200. Women in natural sciences earned \$64,600; women in management occupations averaged \$62,900. By comparison, women working full-time in occupations unique to the primary industries earned an average of \$23,400, those in sales and service occupations earned averaged \$28,400, and those in clerical occupations averaged \$40,000 (Table 6.10).

Table 6.10
Average annual earnings of women and men, by occupation, 2008

Type of occupation	Full-year, full-time workers			All workers		
	Women dollars	Men	Earnings ratio %	Women dollars	Men	Earnings ratio %
Management	62,900	86,300	72.9	55,600	83,800	66.4
Administrative	43,900	61,400	71.5	36,800	56,800	64.8
Professionals						
Business and finance	62,600	106,700 ^E	58.6	54,500	95,700	57.0
Natural sciences	64,600	77,400	83.5	55,500	67,300	82.4
Social sciences/government/religion	43,100	86,600	49.8	34,300	73,400	46.7
Teaching	60,200	72,600	83.0	48,200	55,700	86.6
Medicine/health ¹	73,200	128,900	56.8	60,600	118,300	51.2
Artistic/recreational	42,400	49,700	85.4	29,800	35,300	84.3
Clerical	40,000	49,100	81.5	31,200	40,100	77.8
Sales/service	28,400	49,500	57.3	17,800	32,900	54.1
Trades/transportation	36,800	49,800	73.9	25,800	42,300	61.0
Occupations unique to primary industry	23,400	47,800	49.0	17,400	38,300	45.5
Manufacturing	28,100	50,500	55.7	23,700	43,200	54.8
Total	44,700	62,600	71.3	30,700	47,400	64.6

1. Includes nurses and nurse supervisors.

Note: Average annual earnings exclude Canadians with no earnings.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics.

As with education, so it is with occupation: women working full time earn less than men in the same category. The gap in earnings was greatest between women and men working in primary occupations and in the social sciences/government and religion-related occupations. In these occupations, women earned about one-half what men did. Earnings for women working full time were closest to those of men's for those working in the arts, culture and recreation-related occupations, as well as in teaching and natural science-related occupations. In these occupations, women earned 83% to 85% as much as men in the same occupation group.

The difference in women's and men's earnings is found in both the professional and non-professional occupational groupings. For example, women in medicine and health-related occupations earned about 57% as much as men in those occupations; women in business and finance occupations earned about 59% as much as their male counterparts. In the non-professional occupations such as sales and service, women earned about 57% of men working in these occupations.

93. For information on the share of women in select occupations, see the Paid Work chapter.

Earnings of women with and without children

Raising children entails not only child care responsibilities, but also monetary costs. One cost is the 'family gap,' also called the 'child penalty' or 'motherhood earnings gap.' It measures how far the earnings of women with children fall below those of women without children, other factors being equal.

Age-earnings profiles of Canadian mothers and women without children show that women without children earned more than women with children. For example, at age 30, average hourly earnings of women with children were \$15.20, compared with \$18.10 for women without children (measured in 2004 dollars). On average, the earnings of women with children were 12% lower than those of women without children. And the earnings gap increased with the number of children: with one child, the gap was 9%; with two children, it was 12%; and with three or more children, 20%.

The earnings disadvantage of mothers differed based on several characteristics. For example, lone mothers, mothers with long career interruptions, and mothers with more than a high school education incurred greater losses than married or common-law mothers, mothers with no or short career interruptions, and mothers with no more than a high school education.

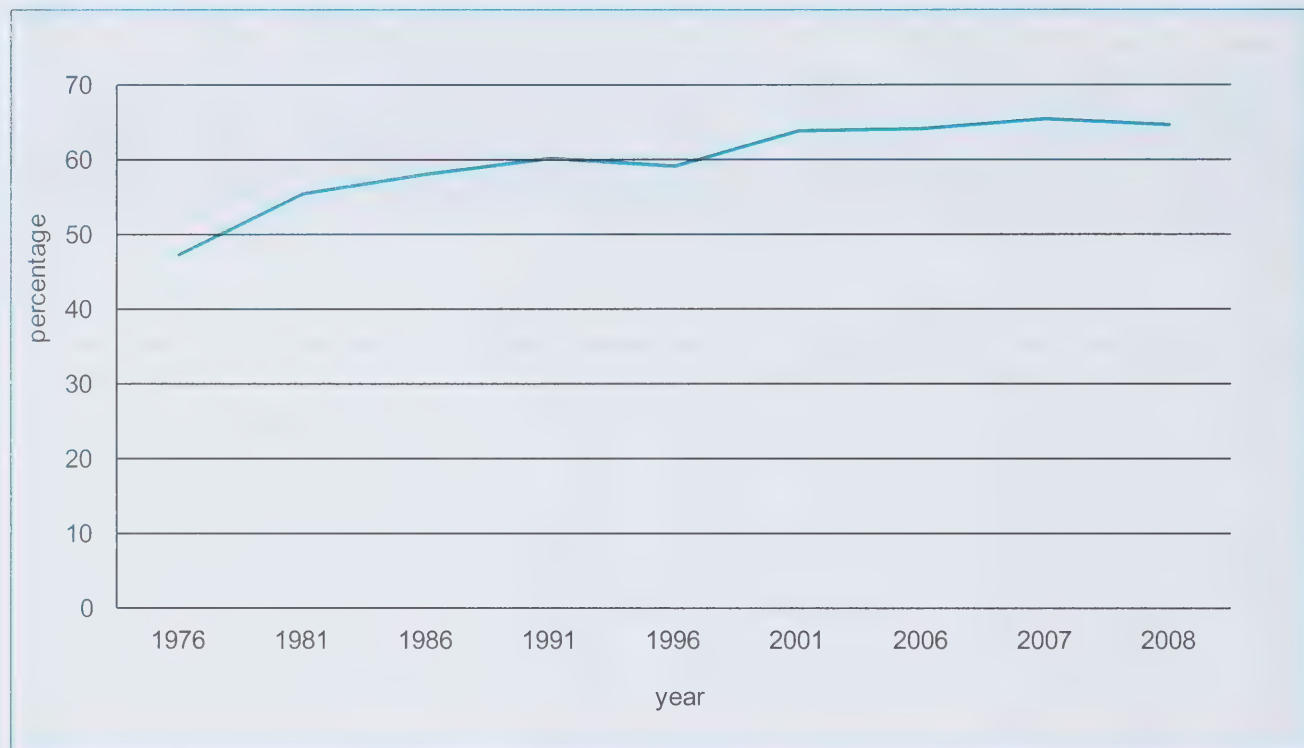
From Zhang, Xuelin. 2009. "Earnings of women with and without children," *Perspectives on Labour and Income*. Vol. 10, no. 3. March. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-001-XIE.

Earnings in dual-income families

The incidence of dual-income families has increased over time. In 1976, only 47% of husband–wife families were dual-income; by 2008, 64% of husband–wife families were dual-earner. Much of this increase took place prior to 1990, when 61% of husband–wife families were dual-earners (Chart 6.2).

Chart 6.2

Dual-earner families as a percentage of all husband–wife families, select years, 1976 to 2008



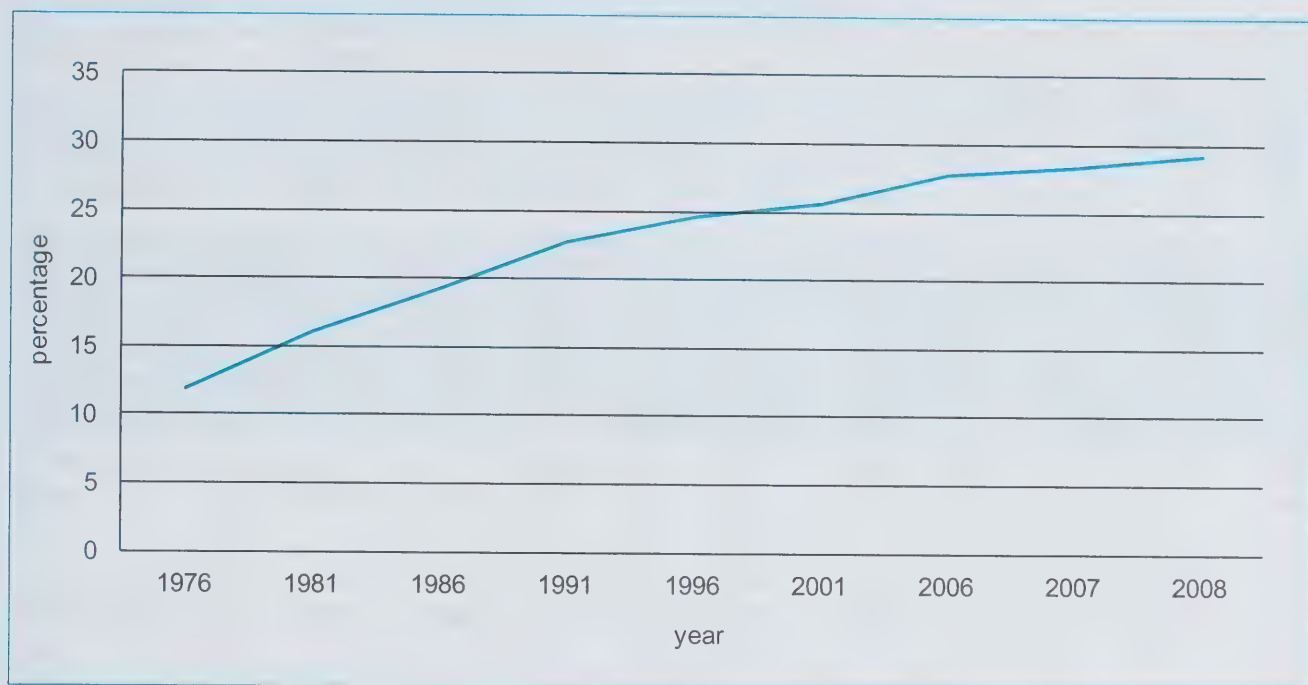
Note: Husband–wife families include common-law unions.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics.

As women's education and incomes have increased, the incidence of dual-earner families in which the wife earned more than the husband has also grown. In 1976 about 12% of wives in dual-earner families earned more than their husbands; by 2008, this share had increased to 29% (Chart 6.3).

Chart 6.3

Percentage of dual-earner families in which wives earned more than husbands, select years, 1976 to 2008



Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0105.

Interestingly, the average total income was lower in families in which the wife earned more than the husband. For example, the average total income for a family in which the wife earned more was \$101,000; in dual-earner families in which the husband earned more it was \$116,400 (Table 6.11).

Table 6.11

Average total family income in dual-earner families, by major income earner, select years, 1976 to 2008

Year	Wife earns more	Husband earns more
	constant 2008 dollars	
1976	74,900	88,400
1981	78,300	88,000
1986	76,200	90,000
1991	79,600	91,300
1996	81,300	93,100
2001	91,200	104,700
2006	99,500	108,100
2007	100,300	112,600
2008	101,000	116,400

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0105.

Low income

There are several ways to measure low income. This chapter uses Statistics Canada's low income after-tax cut-offs (LICO-1992 base). For data related to the low income measure (LIM) see Table 6.20 at the end of the chapter.

Women with low income

The incidence of low income has decreased for both women and men over the last three decades. In 1976, almost 15% of women and 11% of men lived low-income situations. By 2008, 10% of women and 9% of men lived in low income (Table 6.12).

Table 6.12

Percentage of persons in low income after tax 1992 base, select years, 1976 to 2008

Year	Women				Men				Both sexes			
	Under 18	18 to 64	65 and over	Total	Under 18	18 to 64	65 and over	Total	Under 18	18 to 64	65 and over	Total
	percentage											
1976	13.8	12.3	34.1	14.8	13.0	8.7	22.7	11.1	13.4	10.5	29.0	13.0
1981	13.0	11.3	26.3	13.3	12.2	8.3	14.2	9.9	12.6	9.8	21.0	11.6
1986	13.8	12.2	17.6	13.2	14.0	10.1	8.1	10.9	13.9	11.2	13.5	12.1
1991	15.0	13.8	14.6	14.2	15.4	11.7	6.6	12.1	15.2	12.7	11.1	13.2
1996	18.3	16.0	13.2	16.2	18.5	13.9	5.1	14.2	18.4	15.0	9.7	15.2
2001	12.3	12.8	8.3	12.1	12.1	10.6	4.6	10.3	12.2	11.7	6.7	11.2
2006	11.4	11.5	7.0	10.9	11.4	10.9	3.4	10.2	11.4	11.2	5.4	10.5
2007	9.1	10.2	6.1	9.4	9.9	9.7	3.3	9.0	9.6	9.9	4.9	9.2
2008	8.8	10.7	7.6	9.9	9.3	9.8	3.6	9.0	9.1	10.2	5.8	9.4

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0802.

The incidence of living in low income varies somewhat by age. About 9% of women and men younger than 18 were classified as low-income. In the 18-to-64 age group, 11% women and 10% of men were classified as living in low income.

Those in the 65-and-older age group saw the largest decline over the 1976-to-2008 period: the incidence of low income fell from 29% in 1976 to just under 6% in 2008. While both women and men in this age group saw declines in low-income rates, for women the decline was much more pronounced. For example, in 1976, 34% of women 65 and older were classified as low income. By 2008, this had decreased to just under 8%. For men aged 65 and older, over the same period, the incidence of low income declined from 23% to 4%.

Low income and family status

In 2008, about 7% of those living in non-elderly families were classified as low income, compared with just under 3% of elderly families (Table 6.13). This is a reversal from 1976, when 18% of elderly families had low-income status, compared with 10% of individuals in non-elderly families.

Table 6.13

Percentage of persons in low-income after tax, by economic family type, select years, 1976 to 2008

Family type	1976	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2007	2008
	percentage								
Elderly families	17.7	9.6	4.9	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.9	1.8	2.6
Non-elderly families	9.7	8.8	9.8	10.8	13.0	8.6	7.9	6.5	6.7
Married couples	5.8	5.0	5.9	7.7	8.4	6.4	5.6	4.8	5.5
Couples with children	8.2	7.5	8.5	8.7	10.7	7.3	7.1	5.6	6.0
Other couples	3.2	2.6	3.0	2.8	4.6	4.4	2.2	1.4	1.8
Female lone-parent	53.7	44.2	48.7	49.8	52.9	34.2	28.9	24.0	20.9
Male lone-parent	17.9	12.2	16.3	18.7	24.5	11.4	6.9	9.2	7.0
Other non-elderly families	13.1	11.8	11.6	12.7	13.3	7.4	9.4	9.4	9.7

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0804.

Among non-elderly couple families in 2008, 6% of those living in couple families with children or couples living alone had low income; those living in other couple families had the lowest incidence of low income, 2%.

Lone-parent families are generally more likely to have low income than are other non-elderly families. Moreover, low income has always been more prevalent in female-headed lone-parent families. For example, taken together in 2008, about 18% of individuals living in lone-parent families were classified as low income. However, when the family is headed by a female, the incidence of low income was 21%, compared with 7% for those living in male-headed lone-parent families.

Although lone-parent families have a higher incidence of low income than other family types, their incidence of low income after-tax has been declining. In 1976, 54% of those living in lone-parent families headed by women lived in a low-income situation. By 2008, the percentage of those in low-income families headed by a female had declined to 21%.

Children living in low income

About 606,000 children younger than 18 lived in low-income families in 2008, unchanged from 2007 but 29% fewer than in 2003. The proportion of children in low-income families was 9.0% in 2008, half the 1996 peak of 18%.

In 2008, 36% of all children (about 218,000) living in low-income families lived in a lone-parent family headed by a woman. Within female lone-parent families, 23% of children were living in low income in 2008, unchanged from 2007 but lower than the most recent peak of 56% in 1996.

The incidence of low-income after tax is also related to the sex of the major income earner. In families where the major income earner was female, the share of individuals living in low income in 2008 was 16% (Chart 6.4). When the major income earner was male, 6% of individuals were in a low-income situation. Although the percentage of individuals living in low income is always higher when the major income earner in a family is female, this share has been declining. In 1976, 34% of individuals in families where the woman was the major income earner lived in low-income; by 1986 this has decreased to 23%, and by 2008, it was 16%. For families in which men were the major income earner, the share of individuals living in low income declined—from 9% in 1976 to 8% in 1986 and 6% in 2008.

Chart 6.4

Percentage of persons living in low-income after tax, by sex of major income earner, select years, 1976 to 2008



Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0803.

Financial security

The assets, debts and net worth of individuals and families are keys to understanding economic well-being. For example, during periods of low or no income, a household with high assets may be in a position to liquidate them in order to meet their expenses. Among some groups, such as the elderly, economic well-being is not determined by income alone; net worth also plays a part. While those younger than 65 are trying to build up their stock of wealth (buying homes, building up Registered Retirement Savings Plans [RRSPs] or other investments), many of those 65 and over have already accumulated sufficient wealth to draw on in times of need.

Assets by family type

There are three types of assets; financial assets, tangible assets and business assets. Financial assets include savings, stocks, bonds, and RRSP investments. Tangible assets include things such as principal residence, other real estate, cars, collectables, and contents of a home.

In 2009, 98% of married couples without children at home had some kind of assets. The average total assets in 2009 were highest for this family type, at almost \$659,000. Two-parent families with children had average assets of \$567,000; and other family types, \$561,000 (Table 6.14).

Table 6.14
Assets, debts and net worth, by family type, 2009

Family type ¹	Total assets		Total debts		Net worth	
	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median
dollars						
Couple families						
Married couples†	658,600	400,000	61,300	6,000	597,000	325,000
Two-parent families with children ²	567,000	357,000 *	130,200 *	85,000 *	442,300 *	217,000 *
Other families	561,000	260,000 *	68,000	10,000 *	497,600	165,000 *
Lone-parent families						
Female lone-parent†	187,000	60,000	67,800	14,000	119,100	17,000
Male lone-parent	281,800 *	200,000 *	128,800 *	55,000 *	134,600 *	80,000 *
Unattached individuals						
Under 65						
Women†	265,100	100,000	35,000	3,500	226,000	55,000
Men	387,200	125,000 *	50,600 *	6,000 *	335,000	70,000 *
65 years of age and older						
Women†	249,000	75,500	4,900	0	246,000	75,000
Men	415,900 *	219,000 *	9,700 *	0	412,600 *	215,000 *

1. Includes senior families.

2. Includes single children under 25 living in the home.

* indicates significant difference from the reference group

† reference group

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Financial Capability Survey.

Comparing assets across family types, lone-parent families had the lowest average total assets. However, female lone-parent families had lower average total assets (\$187,000) than lone-parent families headed by men (\$282,000).

Median assets⁹⁴ were lower than average assets for every family type, and differences between average and median values were pronounced. For example, while 'other' families had average total assets of more than \$560,000, the median value of assets for this family type was \$260,000, the lowest among all couple family types.

The same held true for female lone-parent families: average total assets were \$187,000 in 2009 compared with a median value of \$60,000, indicating that a large proportion of women in these family types had much lower assets. Conversely, while the median value of total assets (\$200,000) were lower than the average value of assets (\$282,000) for lone-parent families headed by men, the difference was less pronounced.

Debts

Monies owed on a mortgage, loan, line of credit, credit card, or student loans are the principal types of debt. In 2009, average total debts were highest for two-parent families with children, at just over \$130,000. Married couples had an average debt of about \$61,000 (Table 6.14).

Among lone-parent families, average debt levels were higher for men, at almost \$129,000; female lone-parent families had an average total debt of about \$68,000. As was the case for assets, median debt levels were substantially different across family types, ranging from \$6,000 for married couples, to \$85,000 for two-parent families with children.

Net worth

The net worth for a family is the value of their assets minus their debts. Average net worth in 2009 was highest for married couples without children in the home, \$597,000. The net worth of two-parent families with children was lower, approximately \$442,000 (Table 6.14).

Just as there were differences in assets and debts for female-headed and male-headed lone-parent families, there were also differences between the net worth of these types of families. Lone-parent mothers had an average net worth of \$119,000; lone-parent fathers' net worth was about \$135,000.

Examining median net worth, the difference is even more pronounced. The median net worth for lone-parent-mother families was \$17,000; for lone-parent-father families, it was \$80,000.

94. Both average and median measures can be used to describe net worth, but each provides a different picture. Median is determined by ranking all family units from highest to lowest net worth. The value of the asset (or debt or net worth) of the family unit in the middle of the range is the median. Average (or mean) net worth is determined by dividing the total net worth of all family units by the number of family units. The more the average exceeds the median, the more the wealthiest family units in the country contribute to the increase in the average.

Retirement savings

Retirement planning and savings is another important indicator of future economic well-being. Although Canada has the Canada/Quebec Pension Plans, the government-supported retirement income system depends on other voluntary retirement savings opportunities, including private savings and employer pensions. Understanding the contributions and pension coverage of women and men helps provide information related to the future economic well-being of Canadians.

Contributions to pension plans

The Canada/Quebec Pension Plans are mandatory public pension plans that provide a basic level of earnings replacement for all Canadian workers. Both also provide ancillary benefits, such as disability benefits and survivor benefits.

In 2007, 16.3 million workers contributed approximately \$34 billion to the Canada/Quebec Pension Plans. Just over 47% of contributors were women, who had average annual contributions of \$2,453.25. Men's annual contributions averaged \$2,992.17.^{95,96}

The most commonly offered retirement plans by employers in Canada are registered pension plans (RPPs). There were more than 19,000 private and public pension plans in Canada in 2009—61% of these plans were defined benefit plans⁹⁷—up from 49% in 2005 (Table 6.15). Women accounted for 76% of the growth in RPP membership from 2005 to 2009. In 2009, they made up 49.1% of total membership, a slight increase over 2008.

In 2009, women made up about one-half of the 4.5 million members of defined benefit pension plans (Table 6.15).

95. Average contribution calculations are for Canada Pension Plan only.

96. Data for Canada/Quebec Pension Plans are from: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. 2009. *The Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security Stats Book 2009* at <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/isp/statistics/statbook.shtml>, accessed October 19, 2010.

97. A defined benefit plan sets the benefits to be paid according to a formula stipulated in the plan usually based upon salary and years of service.

Table 6.15**Registered pension plans and members, by type of plan and sex, select years, 1980 to 2009**

Type of registered pension plans	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
	number								
All RPPs¹	14,586	19,956	15,845	15,557	15,336	15,130	18,594	19,185	19,179
All members	4,475,429	5,109,363	5,169,644	5,267,894	5,670,684	5,690,580	5,768,280	5,908,633	6,009,721
Women	1,377,733	1,981,138	2,239,676	2,362,973	2,694,653	2,712,822	2,795,041	2,868,645	2,952,422
Men	3,097,696	3,128,225	2,929,968	2,904,921	2,976,031	2,977,758	2,973,239	3,039,988	3,057,299
Defined benefit plans	8,035	8,284	6,990	7,108	7,561	7,611	11,056	11,539	11,709
All members	4,194,283	4,633,587	4,582,154	4,456,034	4,605,601	4,600,581	4,590,805	4,538,192	4,505,211
Women	1,313,097	1,816,518	2,012,887	2,049,373	2,258,196	2,263,430	2,307,875	2,286,397	2,312,808
Men	2,881,186	2,817,069	2,569,267	2,406,661	2,347,405	2,337,151	2,282,930	2,251,795	2,192,403
Defined contribution plans	6,170	11,443	8,609	8,152	7,485	7,196	7,160	7,165	6,882
All members	231,275	430,561	518,669	716,646	885,840	893,403	899,540	935,236	939,157
Women	52,721	151,448	202,473	279,553	361,738	367,405	365,326	381,875	384,695
Men	178,554	279,113	316,196	437,093	524,102	525,998	534,214	553,361	554,462
Hybrid plans²	...	...	11	20	32	16	15	14	21
All members	...	...	4,512	6,043	15,461	11,351	11,337	16,881	28,142
Women	...	...	2,201	2,647	5,523	5,153	5,143	8,218	14,516
Men	...	...	2,311	3,396	9,938	6,198	6,194	8,663	13,626
Composite or combination plans³	248	174	192	221	161	150	144	140	136
All members	32,905	39,127	46,226	58,699	96,781	92,265	140,862	151,150	104,027
Women	6,591	11,143	15,876	21,974	44,655	39,878	64,876	69,135	41,009
Men	26,314	27,984	30,350	36,725	52,126	52,387	75,986	82,015	63,018
Defined benefit and contribution plans⁴	...	...	...	...	38	90	145	249	390
All members	...	...	...	...	17,583	40,057	79,760	201,895	395,053
Women	...	...	...	...	4,955	16,939	32,865	95,099	181,504
Men	...	...	...	...	12,628	23,118	46,895	106,796	213,549
Other types of plans	133	55	43	56	59	67	74	78	41
All members	16,966	6,088	18,083	30,472	49,418	52,923	45,976	65,279	38,131
Women	5,324	2,029	6,239	9,426	19,586	20,017	18,956	27,921	17,890
Men	11,642	4,059	11,844	21,046	29,832	32,906	27,020	37,358	20,241

1. Registered pension plans are plans established by either employers or unions to provide retirement income to employees.

2. Hybrid plans are plans where the pension benefit is the better of that provided by defined benefit or defined contribution provisions.

3. In composite or combination plans, the pension has both defined benefit and defined contribution characteristics.

4. These plans may be for different classes of employees or one benefit type may be for current employees and the other for new employees.

Note: The reference date for the number of registered pension plans and their terms and conditions is January 1.

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 280-0016.

There were about 6,900 defined contribution plans in Canada in 2009, down from about 7,500 in 2005. Fifty-nine percent of defined contribution plan members were men.

Roughly one-third of the labour force is covered by a registered pension plan (RPP). From 1992 to 2008, RPP coverage dropped for both women and men (Table 6.16). Men, however, experienced a sharper decline than women such that, beginning in 2007, women in the labour force were slightly more likely than men to be covered by an RPP.

Table 6.16

Proportion of labour force and paid workers covered by a registered pension plan, by sex, select years, 1992 to 2008

Covered by a registered pension plan	1992	1997	2002	2007	2008
	number				
RPP¹ members					
Both sexes	5,244,703	5,088,455	5,522,563	5,908,633	6,009,721
Women	2,219,933	2,246,847	2,562,038	2,868,645	2,952,422
Men	3,024,770	2,841,608	2,960,525	3,039,988	3,057,299
Labour force			percentage		
Both sexes	36.2	33.5	33.1	32.6	32.6
Women	34.4	32.7	33.3	33.7	34.1
Men	37.6	34.1	32.9	31.7	31.3
Paid workers					
Both sexes	45.3	41.6	39.7	38.3	38.2
Women	41.8	40.1	39.2	38.8	39.3
Men	48.3	42.9	40.2	37.7	37.3

1. Registered pension plans are plans established by either employers or unions to provide retirement income to employees.

Notes: The data used from Labour Force Survey (labour force and paid workers) are annual averages to which the number of Canadian Forces members was added. Paid workers refer to employees in the public and private sector and include self-employed workers in incorporated business (with and without paid help).

Sources: Statistics Canada, *Pension Plans in Canada* and Labour Force Survey.

Among paid workers, RPP coverage declined from about 45% in 1992 to 38% in 2008. Coverage for men who were paid workers declined by about 11 percentage points over the 1992 to 2008 period; women's coverage declined 3 percentage points.

Contributions to registered retirement savings plans

Registered retirement savings plans (RRSP) offer individuals a private tax-assisted retirement savings option. Approximately 6.2 million Canadians contributed more than \$33 billion to RRSPs in 2008, down slightly from 2000 (Table 6.17).

Table 6.17

Registered retirement savings plan contributions, by sex, 2000 to 2008

Types of saving plans	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
number									
Total RRSP ¹									
Contributors	4,291,170	6,241,050	5,991,440	5,948,340	6,002,350	6,135,980	6,196,050	6,292,480	6,178,900
percentage									
Women	45	45	46	46	46	46	46	46	47
Men	55	55	54	54	54	54	54	54	53
dollars									
Total RRSP									
Contributions	20,280,163	28,438,914	27,072,812	27,561,305	28,788,102	30,681,252	32,350,792	34,057,715	33,314,040
percentage									
Share of total contributions									
Women	39	38	39	38	38	38	38	39	39
Men	61	62	61	62	62	62	62	61	61
dollars									
Median contribution	2,700	2,600	2,500	2,600	2,600	2,630	2,730	2,780	2,700
Women	2,200	2,200	2,100	2,100	2,200	2,180	2,250	2,300	2,240
Men	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,070	3,200	3,260	3,220

1. Registered Retirement Savings Plan.

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 111-0039.

Women comprised 47% of RRSP contributors in 2008, up slightly from 45% in 2000.

The median RRSP contribution was \$2,700 in both 2000 and 2008. However, the median contribution for men was higher than that of women over the 2000 to 2008 period. For example, in 2008, the median RRSP contribution for men was \$3,220, compared with \$2,240 for women.

Although women made up almost one-half of RRSP contributors, their share of total contributions was lower. In both 2000 and 2008, women's RRSP contributions made up 39% of total contributions; men's accounted for 61%.

Home ownership and shelter affordability

Home ownership and housing affordability are also important determinants of economic well-being. While home ownership and shelter affordability are largely related to family status, examining the home ownership and housing affordability dimensions of economic well-being for women is nevertheless important.

Home ownership

Of the 12.4 million households in Canada, about 68%, or 8.5 million households, owned their dwelling in 2006, the highest rate of home ownership since 1971. The increase during the past five years continues the long-term trend in rising home ownership rates that began in 1991, after a period of low growth during the 1980s.

Home ownership is related, in large part, to a person's age, income and household type. For example, the home ownership rate for one-person households was 48%, compared with 68% among the general population (Table 6.18). Women who lived alone continued to have a higher home-ownership rate than their male counterparts: 49% of women living alone owned their home, compared with 47% of men living alone. Women homeowners living alone are likely to be older. Approximately one-half were aged 65 or older.

Table 6.18

Homeownership rates for select household types, 2001 and 2006

Household type	2001 percentage	2006	Difference % points
All households	65.8	68.4	2.6
Lone-parent households	50.5	54.9	4.4
Lone-mother households	47.8	52.5	4.7
Lone-father households	62.5	64.9	2.4
One-person households	43.9	47.8	3.9
Women living alone	45.1	48.7	3.6
Men living alone	42.4	46.7	4.3

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

In 2006, for the first time, more than one-half of lone-parent households headed by women owned their home. In 2001, about 48% of lone-mother households owned their home; by 2006, this had risen to almost 53%.

Nearly 6 of every 10 households that owned their home had a mortgage. Of the 8.4 million households that owned their home, 4.9 million, or 58%, had a mortgage, up from 55% since 2001 and the highest share since 1981. Correspondingly, the proportion without a mortgage fell from 45% to 42%.

Shelter affordability among homeowners

Shelter is the largest expenditure for most households, and its affordability can affect well-being. Measuring affordability involves comparing housing costs to a household's ability to meet them. One common measure of housing affordability is calculated using the shelter cost-to-income ratio (STIR). According to this measure, households reach an upper limit of housing affordability when they spend 30% or more of their income on shelter costs.

In 2006, an estimated 3 million households, or 25% of all households, spent 30% or more of their income on shelter. Among homeowners, 18% of all households spent 30% or more of their income on shelter—up from 16% in 2001 (Table 6.19).

Among those living alone who owned their accommodation, 31% spent 30% or more of their income on shelter in 2006, up from 29% in 2001. Women living alone were slightly more likely to spend 30% or more of their income on shelter than were men living alone—32% of women and 30% of men.

About 30% of lone mothers who owned their accommodation spent 30% or more of their income on shelter, up from 27% in 2001. This compares with 21% of lone fathers.

Shelter affordability among renters

Shelter affordability is an issue not only for homeowners: anyone spending 30% or more of their income on housing (shelter) costs may face economic uncertainty or hardship. Households that rented comprised 51% of households that spent 30% or more of their income on shelter.

Table 6.19

Percentage of lone-parent owner and renter households spending 30% or more of their income on shelter, 2001 and 2006

Household type	Owner households		Renter households	
	2001	2006	2001	2006
	percentage			
All households	16.0	17.8	39.6	40.3
Lone-parent households	25.8	27.5	47.8	43.0
Lone-mother households	27.4	29.5	50.4	45.3
Lone-father households	20.0	20.6	31.9	30.2
One-person households	28.9	31.0	50.1	51.6
Women living alone	29.6	31.6	55.6	56.6
Men living alone	27.9	30.1	43.4	45.6

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population 2001 and 2006.

In 2006, 1.5 million renters, or 40% of all renters, spent 30% or more of their household income on shelter, about the same as in 2001 (Table 6.19).

In 2006, about 45% of lone-mother households that rented their accommodation spent at least 30% of their income on shelter, down from 50% in 2001. Among lone-father households that rented, that proportion declined from 32% in 2001 to 30% in 2006.

Women living alone who rented were the most likely to spend 30% or more of their income on shelter: 57% did so in 2006, up from 56% in 2001. However, male renters who lived alone and spent 30% or more of their income on shelter had the largest percentage point increase between censuses—from 43% in 2001 to 46% in 2006.

Table 6.20**Low income measure after tax, by sex and age, select years, 1976 to 2008**

Year	Women				Men				Both sexes			
	Under 18	18 to 64	65 and older	Total	Under 18	18 to 64	65 and older	Total	Under 18	18 to 64	65 and older	Total
			percentage									
1976	14.7	11.6	34.3	14.6	13.9	8.4	26.0	11.5	14.3	10.0	30.6	13.0
1981	14.8	11.2	23.8	13.4	14.2	8.2	16.0	10.6	14.5	9.7	20.4	12.0
1986	15.1	11.6	13.2	12.6	15.0	9.1	8.3	10.6	15.1	10.4	11.1	11.6
1991	15.6	12.1	6.3	12.2	15.4	9.8	4.2	10.7	15.5	11.0	5.4	11.5
1996	17.3	13.6	5.8	13.5	17.4	11.1	2.9	11.9	17.4	12.4	4.6	12.7
2001	15.7	13.5	9.8	13.5	15.1	11.0	5.6	11.4	15.4	12.3	8.0	12.5
2006	15.3	13.5	11.7	13.6	15.0	11.4	6.7	11.7	15.1	12.4	9.4	12.6
2007	14.6	13.0	12.8	13.3	15.4	11.1	7.5	11.6	15.0	12.0	10.4	12.5
2008	15.0	13.9	15.7	14.4	15.7	11.9	8.2	12.2	15.3	12.9	12.3	13.3

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 202-0802.

The gender pay gap revisited

When comparing earnings of women and men, the data show that men earn more than women. For example, the ratio of female-to-male annual earnings for full-year full-time workers has been relatively steady at around 0.72 since 1992. However, examining the female-to-male earnings ratio as a means to examine the existence and size of a gender pay gap may not be appropriate—particularly because among men and women working full-time, weekly work hours differ: according to the Labour Force Survey, men employed full-time usually worked 3.7 hours longer than full-time women in 2007.

Gender differences in pay may be more appropriately measured using hourly wages. Comparing the average hourly wages of women and men, the ratio was 83.3% in 2008 – up from 75.7% in 1988 (Box Table 6.1).⁹⁸

Examining the wage ratio by age across time illustrates differences between the age groups. In general, for each age group, there has been increase in the wage ratios between 1988 and 2008. For example, the female-to-male wage ratio for workers aged 25 to 29 was 0.846 in 1988 but had increased to 0.901 by 2008. Similarly, the wage ratio for those aged 50 to 54 increased 16.2 percentage points from 0.645 in 1988 to 0.807 in 2008.

The hourly wage gap is larger (the female-to-male ratio is smaller) for older workers compared to younger workers. This difference may be a result of generational differences between women. For example, younger women are more likely to have high levels of education, work full-time and be employed in different types of jobs than their older female counterparts.

Box Table 6.1

Female-to-male average hourly wage ratio, select years, 1988 to 2008

Year	Age group						
	Total	25 to 29	30 to 34	35 to 39	40 to 44	45 to 49	50 to 54
female-to-male hourly wage ratio							
1988	0.757	0.846	0.794	0.768	0.736	0.681	0.645
1993	0.794	0.905	0.886	0.772	0.762	0.700	0.709
1998	0.811	0.901	0.851	0.805	0.808	0.750	0.749
2003	0.825	0.920	0.868	0.843	0.804	0.768	0.771
2008	0.833	0.901	0.858	0.837	0.825	0.784	0.807
Change							
1988 to 2008	0.076	0.056	0.064	0.068	0.089	0.103	0.162

Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Market Activity Survey 1988, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics 1993, and Labour Force Survey, 2003 and 2008.

98. For a full discussion of the differences in the gender wage gap and the gender earnings gap see: Baker, M. and Drolet, M. *A new view of the male/female pay gap*, Canadian Labour Market and Skills Research Network. Working paper No. 50. December 2009.

Factors contributing to the decline in the gender wage gap

Because the gender wage gap differs by age, it is not surprising that the explanations for differences in wages also differ for each age group. While much of the change in the wage ratio is a result of changes in the work and personal characteristics of women, it is important to note that in some instances it is changes in the work status of men that are behind the change in the ratio. For instance, while the oldest age group of the study population saw the biggest improvement in the wage ratio between 1988 and 2008 (an increase of 16.2 percentage points), much of this increase was driven by the fact that men in 2008 were much less likely to be in management occupations than in 1988. This accounted for about 28% of increase in the wage ratio for this age group (Box Table 6.2). Additionally, 15% of the increase in the ratio was attributable to changes in job tenure for women, since women in 2008 were more likely to have long job tenure than women in 1988.

In the case of the 25 to 29 year old age group, 66% of the change in the wage ratio between 1988 and 2009 can be explained by the changes in characteristics of workers. About 28% of the change in the ratio was a result of improvements in the level of education of women; 27% was a result of changes in union status (mainly because the unionization rate for men fell); and 19% was attributable to changes in the occupational composition of young women—as young women moved out of sales, service and clerical occupations into higher paid occupations in the health and education fields. Another 13% of the difference was a result of longer job tenure and a shift away from part-time work for women. About one-third of the change for this age group could not be explained by differences in the characteristics studied.

In general, women continue to have average hourly wages that are lower than men's. Nevertheless, the gap between the wages of women and men has declined. The reasons underlying the changing gap are complex. However, because the characteristics of women and men entering the labour market in 2008 are more likely to be similar today than in the past, part of the increase in the wage ratio (narrowing of the wage gap) is a result of older cohorts of men and women with very different personal and labour market characteristics leaving the labour market and being replaced by a younger cohort of women and men whose personal and labour market characteristics are more similar.

The data are drawn from the Labour Market Activity Survey (LMAS), the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The unit of measurement is hourly wages expressed in 2007 dollars

Adapted from: Drolet, Marie. (Forthcoming). "Why has the gender wage gap narrowed?" *Perspectives on Labour and Income*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-001-X.

Box Table 6.2

Decomposition of the change in the average hourly female-to-male wage ratio between 1988 and 2008, by age group

Type of changes	Age group					
	25 to 29	30 to 34	35 to 39	40 to 44	45 to 49	50 to 54
	percentage point					
Change in the female-to-male wage ratio between 1988 and 2008	5.6	6.4	6.8	8.9	10.3	16.2
	percentage					
Total change explained	66.0	52.7	40.2	57.1	47.1	65.4
Change attributable to changes in...						
Age	2.3	0.9	0.7	-0.1	-0.4	-0.9
Education	28.4	27.8	8.5	-7.0	-0.8	3.6
Province	-11.2	-7.2	-7.0	-3.3	-4.9	1.1
Tenure	5.3	6.5	21.6	26.5	13.9	14.6
Marital status	0.8	4.2	2.5	6.0	3.0	1.8
Union	26.8	9.3	3.1	5.0	4.8	6.6
Part-time	8.7	11.1	5.5	4.0	1.6	6.8
Industry	-12.0	-4.3	-5.8	11.1	1.6	4.0
Occupation	18.7	4.3	11.0	15.7	28.2	27.7
Unexplained	34.0	47.3	59.8	42.8	52.9	34.6

Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Market Activity Survey 1988 and Labour Force Survey, 2008.

Chapter 7

Women and the Criminal Justice System

By Tina Hotton Mahony

The involvement of women and girls in the criminal justice system has largely been as crime victims rather than as perpetrators. While females make up about half of violent crime victims, they represent a minority of offenders. However, in order to understand the scope of issues related to women and the criminal justice system it is important to look at the incidence and experience of crime against women, as well as women as offenders. It is because of the relatively small number of females committing crimes that it is crucial to closely monitor female offending patterns. Otherwise, differences in the experiences of women and girls in the criminal justice system may be masked by trends that reflect the larger male offender population. This information is necessary to assess responses by the justice and social systems to females who offend and in the development of gender-informed crime prevention strategies.⁹⁹ The following chapter explores the prevalence and nature of female victimization, female criminality as well as the processing of female offenders through the criminal justice system in Canada.

Female Victims of Violent Crime

In Canada, there are two main sources of information on victims of crime: the General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization and the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey. There are advantages and disadvantages with both sources of data for estimating crime. Victim-reported survey data, such as the GSS, are advantageous because they capture information on criminal incidents that do not come to the attention of police. According to past research, for many reasons¹⁰⁰ people do not always disclose their victimization experiences to formal authorities.^{101,102} On the other hand, administrative police data such as the UCR allow one to track changes over time in many types of crime¹⁰³ reported to and substantiated by police. It is also a key source of information on criminal incidents that proceed with formal charges, for possible entry into the judicial and correctional systems.

Self-reported criminal victimization

According to the 2009 GSS, approximately 7.4 million people living in the ten provinces, or just over one quarter of the population aged 15 years and older, reported being a victim of one of the eight crime types as measured in the GSS. While most of these incidents were property related crimes, approximately 1.6 million violent crimes involved a female victim and 1.7 million involved a male victim.¹⁰⁴ In 2009, females were most likely to report being a victim of physical assault, followed by sexual assault and robbery (Chart 7.1).

99. Bottos, S. 2007. *Women and Violence: Theory, Risk, and Treatment Implications*. Ottawa. Research Branch Correctional Service Canada.

<http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/text/rsrch/reports/r198/r198-eng.pdf> (Accessed December 13, 2010).

100. For example, the most common reasons for not reporting incidents of spousal violence to the police included the belief that it was a personal matter that did not concern the police (82%), the situation was being dealt with another way (81%), and feeling that the incident was not important enough (70%).

101. Mihorean, K. 2005. "Trends in self-reported spousal violence." *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile*. 2005. AuCoin, K. (ed.). Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-224-X. Ottawa. www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2005000-eng.pdf (Accessed March 31, 2010).

102. Perreault, S. and S. Brennan. 2010. "Criminal Victimization in Canada, 2009". *Juristat*. Vol. 30, no. 2. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2010002/article/11340-eng.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

103. The General Social Survey on Victimization collects information on criminal victimization for eight crime types: sexual assault, robbery, physical assault, break and enter, motor vehicle/parts theft, theft of household property, vandalism, and theft of personal property.

104. Violent crime in the General Social Survey is measured using three broad index offence categories: physical assault, sexual and robbery.

Chart 7.1

Rate of female's self-reported victimization, 1999, 2004 and 2009



Note: Rate per 1,000 population 15 and older, excludes data from Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut.

Sources: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999, 2004 and 2009.

Overall, females reported similar rates of physical assault and sexual assault in 2009 as reported in 1999. Rates of sexual assault were approximately half those of physical assault, at 33 and 34 incidents per 1,000 population in 1999 and 2009 respectively. Females were slightly more likely to report being a victim of a robbery in 2009 than they were ten years earlier (with rates increasing from 7 per 1,000 to 10 per 1,000 population). Among female victims of violent crime in 2009, only one-third reported the incident to police.

Police-reported violent crime

Similar to GSS estimates of violent crime, police-reported data as reported through the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey show that female victims accounted for half of all victims of violent crimes¹⁰⁵ reported to police in 2009. The most common offence perpetrated against females was assault level 1¹⁰⁶, accounting for 46% of all incidents reported to police. Other offences perpetrated against females included uttering threats (13%), assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (9%), sexual assault (9%), and criminal harassment (7%). Offences perpetrated against males were similar, with assault level 1 (42%) and assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (17%) accounting for the majority of incidents (Table 7.1).

105. For incidents involving multiple violations, counts are based on the most serious offence in an incident.

106. Assault level 1, or common assault, is the least serious form of assault and includes pushing, slapping, punching and face-to-face verbal threats. Assault level 2 involves carrying, using or threatening to use a weapon against someone or causing someone bodily harm. Assault level 3 (aggravated assault) involves wounding, maiming, disfiguring or endangering the life of someone.

Table 7.1**Victims of police-reported violent crimes, by type of crime, 2009**

Type of violent crime	Female victim		Male victim		% female victims
	number	%	number	%	
Homicide	158	0.1	442	0.2	26.3
Attempted murder	182	0.1	556	0.3	24.7
Other violations causing death	32	0.0	61	0.0	34.4
Sexual assaults - all levels	17,719	8.8	2,587	1.3	87.3
Other sexual violations ¹	2,727	1.4	682	0.3	80.0
Assault - level 3 - aggravated	848	0.4	2,612	1.3	24.5
Assault - level 2 - weapon or bodily harm	17,846	8.9	34,018	17.2	34.4
Assault - level 1 - common assault	93,279	46.3	82,136	41.6	53.2
Other assaults ²	2,410	1.2	9,518	4.8	20.2
Forcible confinement, kidnapping or abduction ³	3,832	1.9	1,187	0.6	76.3
Robbery	8,651	4.3	20,298	10.3	29.9
Extortion	442	0.2	682	0.3	39.3
Criminal harassment	14,350	7.1	4,617	2.3	75.7
Threatening or harassing phone calls	11,161	5.5	5,310	2.7	67.8
Uttering threats	26,850	13.3	30,973	15.7	46.4
Other violent <i>Criminal Code</i> violations ⁴	1,127	0.6	1,675	0.8	40.2
Total	201,614	100.0	197,354	100.0	50.5

1. Other sexual violations primarily include sexual offences against children as well as other sexual offences involving adults.

2. Includes assaults against peace officers, unlawfully causing bodily harm, criminal negligence causing bodily harm, and other assaults.

3. Includes forcible confinement, kidnapping; abduction under 14, not parent/guardian; abduction under 16; removal of children from Canada; abduction under 14 contravening a custody order; abduction under 14, by parent/guardian.

4. Excludes other sexual violations involving adults and includes firearm violations.

Notes: One incident may involve multiple violations. Counts are based upon the most serious violation against the victim. Incidents where the sex of the victim is unknown were excluded.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Incident-Based Survey, 2009.

Females are the most common victims of sexual assault and “other sexual violations”¹⁰⁷ (representing 87% and 80% of incidents, respectively). Other offences reported to police that are committed primarily against females include forcible confinement and related offences (76%), criminal harassment (76%), as well as threatening and harassing phone calls (68%). Males, on the other hand, accounted for three quarters of victims of homicide, attempted murder, aggravated assault, and approximately two thirds of victims of robbery (Table 7.1).

Consistent with self-reported victimization data¹⁰⁸, police statistics show that females are most likely to be victimized by someone they know. According to 2009 police-reported data, spouses (current or former) and other intimate partners committed more than 41% of violent incidents involving female victims. Other family members and acquaintances account for another 42% of violent incidents (Table 7.2).

107. Other sexual violations primarily include sexual offences against children such as sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, sexual exploitation, incest, corrupting children, luring a child via the computer, as well as other sexual offences involving adults.

108. Perreault, S. and S. Brennan. 2010. “Criminal Victimization in Canada, 2009”. *Juristat*. Vol. 30, no. 2. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2010002/article/11340-eng.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

Table 7.2
Female victims of violent crime, by relationship of the accused to the victim, 2009

Type of violent crime	Current/ former spouse ⁵		Intimate relationship ⁶		Other family ⁷		Acquain- tance ⁸		Stranger		Total	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
Homicide	49	38.3	17	13.3	31	24.2	17	13.3	14	10.9	128	100.0
Attempted murder	44	28.4	33	21.3	27	17.4	33	21.3	18	11.6	155	100.0
Other violations causing death	6	21.4	0	0.0	1	3.6	9	32.1	12	42.9	28	100.0
Sexual assaults - all levels	764	4.9	1,178	7.6	3,677	23.8	7,040	45.5	2,818	18.2	15,477	100.0
Other sexual violations ¹	8	0.3	127	5.2	938	38.7	919	37.9	433	17.9	2,425	100.0
Assault - level 3 - aggravated	187	24.7	214	28.3	110	14.5	167	22.1	79	10.4	757	100.0
Assault - level 2 - weapon or bodily harm	4,075	25.1	3,421	21.1	2,498	15.4	3,852	23.7	2,376	14.6	16,222	100.0
Assault - level 1 - common assault	23,655	27.7	21,746	25.4	13,441	15.7	19,204	22.5	7,459	8.7	85,505	100.0
Other assaults ²	127	5.9	174	8.1	79	3.7	523	24.4	1,238	57.8	2,141	100.0
Forcible confinement, kidnapping or abduction ³	1,058	30.0	1,273	36.1	282	8.0	423	12.0	495	14.0	3,531	100.0
Robbery	102	1.4	125	1.7	74	1.0	637	8.6	6,483	87.4	7,421	100.0
Extortion	29	7.7	40	10.6	27	7.2	143	37.9	138	36.6	377	100.0
Criminal harassment	2,723	22.2	3,552	29.0	600	4.9	4,075	33.3	1,302	10.6	12,252	100.0
Threatening or harassing phone calls	834	9.2	1,936	21.5	596	6.6	3,213	35.6	2,445	27.1	9,024	100.0
Uttering threats	3,912	16.3	3,288	13.7	3,354	13.9	10,284	42.7	3,222	13.4	24,060	100.0
Other violent <i>Criminal Code</i> violations ⁴	114	11.6	72	7.3	143	14.6	366	37.3	285	29.1	980	100.0
Total	37,687	20.9	37,196	20.6	25,878	14.3	50,905	28.2	28,817	16.0	180,483	100.0

1. Other sexual violations primarily include sexual offences against children as well as other sexual offences involving adults.

2. Includes assaults against peace officers, unlawfully causing bodily harm, criminal negligence causing bodily harm, and other assaults.

3. Includes forcible confinement, kidnapping; abduction under 14, not parent/guardian; abduction under 16; removal of children from Canada; abduction under 14 contravening a custody order; abduction under 14, by parent/guardian.

4. Includes firearm violations. Excludes other sexual violations involving adults.

5. Includes common-law relationships.

6. Includes current and former dating relationships as well as "other intimate relationships" such as extra-marital lovers. In some cases, the victim and the accused were living together at the time of the offence.

7. Includes siblings and all others related by blood, marriage (including common-law), adoption or foster care.

8. Includes friends, neighbours, authority figures, business relationships as well as criminal relationships (such as prostitutes, drug dealers and their clients).

Notes: One incident may involve multiple violations. Counts are based upon the most serious violation against the victim. Incidents where the relationship of the accused to the victim is unknown were excluded.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Incident-Based Survey, 2009.

Sexual assaults against females that are brought to the attention of police are more likely to be committed by an acquaintance (46%), a family member (24%), or a stranger (18%) than either a spouse or other intimate partner (5% and 8%, respectively). The same is true of “other sexual violations”, with a family member (39%) or an acquaintance (38%) accounting for the majority of perpetrators. According to a 2008 study (see Text Box), rates of sexual assault reported to police are highest among female youth 12 to 14 years of age and decline with age.¹⁰⁹

Child and youth victims of police-reported violent crime, 2008

Focusing exclusively on child and youth victims of violent crime¹¹⁰, a 2008 study found that rates of violent crime among children and youth peaked at age 17 for both girls and boys. Among these victims, reported rates of violence were slightly higher for girls than boys across age categories, with the exception of adolescents 9 to 12 years of age, where rates of violence reported to police were higher for boys than for girls. The higher rates of violent crime perpetrated against girls is primarily due to their higher rates of sexual violence. Rates of sexual assault were highest among female youth 12 to 14 years of age (623 incidents per 100,000 population) declining thereafter with age (from 552 for 15 to 17 years old to 246 for young adults 18 to 24 years of age). Sexual violence against girls is most commonly perpetrated by someone known to the victim (75%), such as a male acquaintance or relative.

Rates of police reported violence against girls have remained relatively stable over the five-year reference period (2004 to 2008) but did vary across Canada. Rates were highest in the northern territories of Nunavut, Northwest Territories and Yukon (ranging from 5,401 to 2,444 per 100,000) and lowest in Ontario (909) and Quebec (970).¹¹¹

Self-reported spousal violence

Overall rates of self-reported spousal violence have decreased over the past decade from 7.4% in 1999 to 6.2% in 2009. According to the 2009 GSS, women and men were equally likely to report some form of physical or sexual violence by a current or former common-law or marital partner. In 2009, approximately 600,600 women and 585,100 men aged 15 and over reported spousal violence in the five years prior to the survey. This estimate is similar to what was found in 2004 and 1999.

While the percentage of women assaulted by a current spouse has changed little from 1999 to 2009, the number of women reporting spousal violence by a former spouse has declined. In 2009, 20% of women in contact with a previous spouse or common-law partner reported some form of physical or sexual violence, down from 28% in 1999 (Chart 7.2).

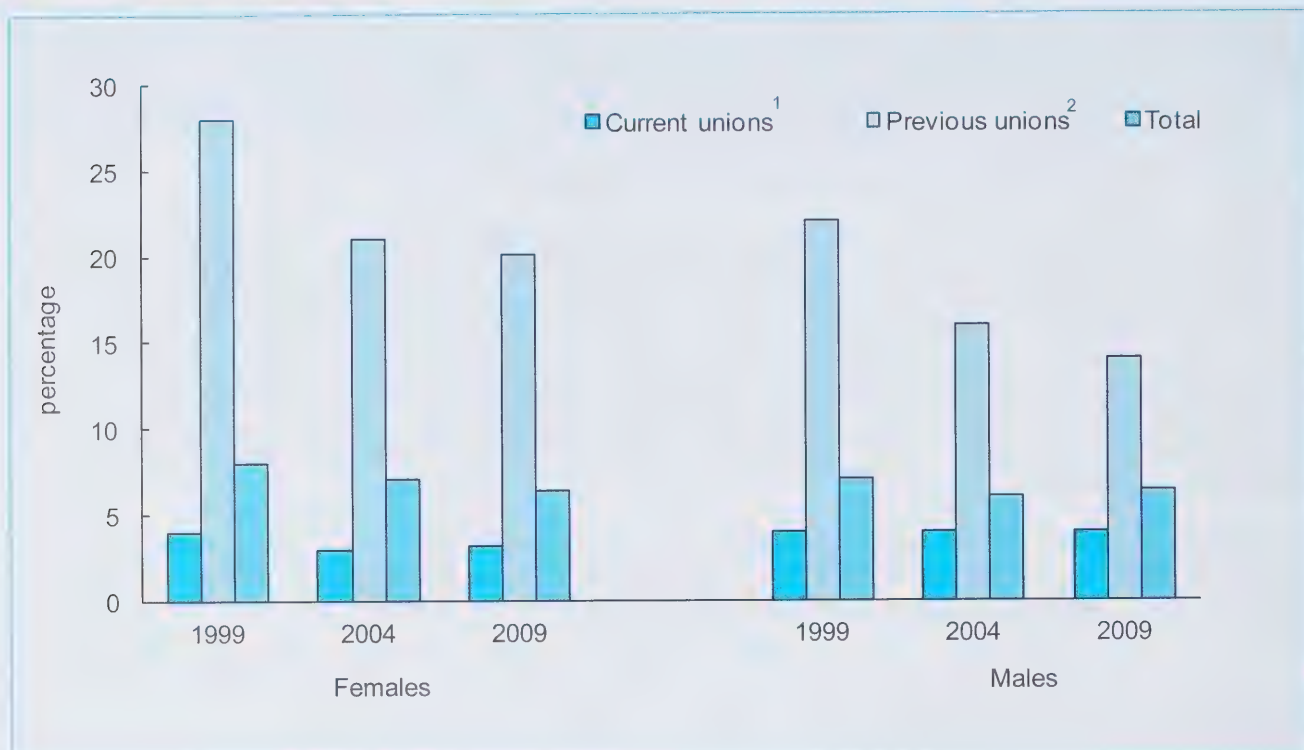
109. As we do not have self-reported victimization data for persons less than 15 years of age, it is not possible to determine if girls 12 to 14 years of age are at greater risk of sexual assault or if a greater proportion of these cases are reported to police, and lead to formal charges.

110. This analysis is based on children and youth 0 to 17 years of age.

111. Ogrodnik, L. 2009. “Child and Youth Victims of Police-reported Violent Crime, 2008”. *Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Profile Series*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85F0033M, no. 23. Ottawa.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85f0033m/85f0033m2010023-eng.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

Chart 7.2

Victims of self-reported spousal violence within the past 5 years, 1999, 2004, and 2009



1. Includes legally married, common-law and same-sex spouses. Excludes people who refused to state their marital status.

2. Includes those separated from a legal marriage, common-law or same-sex relationship as well as divorced spouses. Only those in contact with a former spouse or common-law partner in the past 5 years were included in this analysis.

Notes: Responses "Don't know" and "Not stated" are not listed, therefore, the sum of percentages may not add up to 100%.

Excludes data from Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut.

Sources: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999, 2004 and 2009.

Although incidence rates of spousal violence are similar, the scope and severity of the violence experienced by women and men differ. Women were more likely than men to report a physical injury (42% versus 18%) or fearing for their lives as a result of the spousal violence (33% versus 5%^E), and were more likely to report chronic violence defined as 11 or more incidents of violence (20% of women, compared to 7%^E of men) (Table 7.3).

Table 7.3**Severity of spousal violence reported by female and male victims, 2009**

Spousal violence	Female victim†		Male victim	
	thousands	%	thousands	%
Total spousal¹ violence	601	100.0	585	100.0
Most serious type of violence				
Threat, threw something	91	15.0	122	21.0
Pushed, shoved, slapped	223	37.0	188	32.0
Kicked, bit, hit, hit with something	81	13.0	209	36.0 *
Sexually assaulted, beaten, choked, threatened with a gun or knife	203	34.0	59	10.0 E*
% injured				
Physical injury	253	42.0	103	18.0 *
No physical injury	347	58.0	479	82.0 *
Not stated/Don't know	F	F	F	F
% receiving medical attention				
Received medical attention	46	8.0 E	F	F
Did not receive medical attention	207	34.0	88	15.0 *
No physical injury	348	58.0	483	82.0 *
Not stated/Don't know	F	F	F	F
% fearing for their lives				
Feared for their life	195	33.0	31	5.0 E*
Did not fear for their life	403	67.0	550	94.0 *
Not stated/Don't know	F	F	F	F
Number of incidents				
One incident	258	43.0	353	60.0 *
2 to 5 incidents	145	24.0	134	23.0
6 to 10 incidents	55	9.0 E	30	5.0 E
11 or more	118	20.0	42	7.0 E*
Don't know/not stated	24	4.0 E	27	5.0 E
Total spousal violence	601	100.0	585	100.0

† reference group

* statistically significant difference from the reference group at $p < 0.05$

1. Includes legally married, common-law, and same-sex spouses.

Notes: Values may not add up to totals due to rounding. Excludes data from the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut which will be published at a later date.**Source:** Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2009.

While spousal violence crosses social, economic and cultural groups, research has suggested that some people are at higher risk than others.¹¹² According to the 2009 GSS, the proportion of Aboriginal women living in the ten provinces who reported spousal violence was double that of non-Aboriginal women. Approximately 15%¹¹³ of Aboriginal women reported spousal violence by a current or former marital or common-law partner in the past five years, compared to 6% of non-Aboriginal women. Aboriginal women were also two times more likely (34%) to report having experienced emotional or financial abuse than non-Aboriginal women (17%) (Chart 7.3). GSS data also suggest that Aboriginal women experience more serious forms of spousal violence than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (refer to the chapter entitled “First Nations, Métis and Inuit Women in Canada” for more discussion).

Chart 7.3

Proportion of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women reporting spousal violence, emotional and financial abuse, 2009



Notes: Includes legally married, common-law and same-sex spouses. Excludes people who refused to state their marital status. Estimates of spousal violence include abuse that occurred over the past 5 years. Emotional and financial abuse are lifetime estimates, but were only asked of respondents who had a spouse or common-law partner within the past 5 years. Excludes data from Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2009.

112. Most research on race and ethnicity and intimate partner violence in Canada has focused on comparisons between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal population. Although the General Social Survey does collect information on the cultural origins of respondents, the sample size is not large enough to calculate reliable estimates by race or cultural background. However, those who identified themselves as a visible minority or an immigrant were not found to be associated with increased levels of spousal violence. Similar findings have been found for victimization in general. It must be noted however that despite improvements in the methodology used for interviewing women about violence, surveys are only conducted in Canada's two official languages which may present a barrier to the collection of data from Aboriginal and immigrant women.

113. This estimate has a high coefficient of variation and should be used with caution.

Help seeking behaviour

Given that female victims of spousal violence were more likely than male victims to report suffering physical and emotional consequences as a result of the violence, it is not surprising that women are also more likely to seek the help of formal and informal services. According to the 2009 GSS, approximately 30% of spousal violence incidents involving female victims and 13% involving male victims were reported to police (Table 7.4).¹¹⁴ Among female victims, the incident was reported by the victim herself in 24% of cases and by someone else in less than 7% of cases. Incidents involving male victims were equally likely to be reported by the victim (7%) as by someone else (7%). Consistent with studies of police charging in intimate partner violence incidents^{115,116}, those involving female victims are more likely to lead to formal charges than those involving male victims (44% versus 18%).

According to the 2009 GSS, more women than men reported relying on informal or formal supports other than the police. In 2009, 80% of female victims and 56% of male victims of spousal violence told informal sources about the violence, such as family, a friend or neighbour, a co-worker, a doctor or nurse, or spiritual advisor. Approximately 38% of female victims of spousal violence contacted formal services such as a crisis centre or crisis line, counselor or psychologist, community or family centre, women's centre, victim services program, or shelter compared to 18% of men (Table 7.4).

114. The proportion of spousal violence victims that stated that the police found out about the incident decreased from 2004 to 2009. This decline occurred primarily among female victims.

115. Hotton Mahony, T. 2010. "Police-reported dating violence in Canada, 2008". *Juristat*. Vol 29, no. 3. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2010002/article/11242-eng.htm>. (Accessed December 10, 2010).

116. Taylor-Butts, A. 2009. "Fact sheet—Police-reported spousal violence in Canada". *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile*, 2009. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-224-XIE. Ottawa. www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/2009000/part-partie2-eng.htm (Accessed March 31, 2010).

Table 7.4

Victims of spousal violence within the past 5 years, by sex and service contacted or used, 2009

Victims' use of services	Female victim†		Male victim		Total	
	thousands	%	thousands	%	thousands	%
Told informal sources¹						
Yes	478	79.5	328	56.0 *	805	67.9
No	117	19.5	254	43.5 *	372	31.3
Contacted or used formal services²						
Yes	228	37.9	105	18.0 *	333	28.1
No	369	61.5	475	81.2 *	844	71.2
Police found out about the incident						
Yes	180	30.0	79	13.4 *	259	21.8
No	414	68.9	503	85.9 *	917	77.3
Respondent reported to police						
Yes	141	23.5	39 ^E	6.6 ^{E*}	180	15.2
No	453	75.5	542	92.7 *	996	84.0
Police found out some other way						
Yes	39 ^E	6.6 ^E	40 ^E	6.8 ^E	79	6.7
No	555	92.4	541	92.5	1,096	92.5
Total	601	100.0	585	100.0	1,186	100.0

† reference group

* statistically significant difference from the reference group at $p < 0.05$

1. Informal sources include family, a friend or neighbor, a co-worker, a doctor or nurse, a lawyer, or a spiritual advisor.

2. Formal services include a crisis centre or crisis line, a counsellor or psychologist, a community or family centre, a shelter, centres for women, men or seniors, or victim services or victim witness assistance programs.

Notes: Includes legally married, common-law, same-sex, separated and divorced spouses. Don't know and not stated are included in the total, but not listed. Therefore totals will not add up to 100%. Excludes data from the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2009.

Use of transition homes

The establishment of shelters as a refuge for women fleeing abusive situations dates back to the 1970s and has increased in recent years from fewer than 20 known facilities in 1975 to 569 in 2007. In 2007 there were approximately 101,000 admissions of women and dependent children to shelters across Canada between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008.¹¹⁷

A one-day snapshot of shelters indicates that the vast majority (80%) of women and children staying in shelters on April 16, 2008 were there to escape an abusive situation.¹¹⁸ Most abused women (76%) were fleeing the abuse of a current or former spouse or common-law partner while 7% were seeking protection from a dating or ex-dating partner (Table 7.5).

117. Sauvé, J. and M. Burns. 2009. "Residents of Canada's shelters for abused women, 2008". *Juristat*. Vol. 29, no. 2. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2009002/article/10845-eng.htm> (Accessed January 3, 2011).

118. Other reasons for using shelters included an inability to find affordable or available housing, mental health problems, and drug or alcohol addiction.

Table 7.5**Selected characteristics of abused women residing in shelters on April 16, 2008, Canada**

Selected characteristics	Abused women	
	number	%
Parental status		
Admitted with child(ren)	1,562	48.0
Admitted without child(ren) ¹	677	21.0
No child(ren) and parenting responsibilities	800	25.0
Unknown	183	6.0
Relationship to abuser		
Common-law partner	1,207	37.0
Spouse	860	27.0
Ex-common-law partner	231	7.0
Dating or ex-dating partner	210	7.0
Relative (e.g., parent, child)	199	6.0
Ex-spouse	155	5.0
Other ²	107	3.0
Unknown	253	8.0
Total women admitted due to abuse	3,222	100.0

1. It is not known if women admitted without their children had custody of those children at the time of admittance.

2. 'Other' includes all other relationships not otherwise classified.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2007/2008.

Almost half of women residing in shelters (48%) were admitted with children. Many of these women reported that the protection of their children from the physical and/or emotional trauma of violence was a factor in deciding to seek refuge. One in four women reported seeking shelter to protect their children from witnessing the abuse. Women also reported the need to protect their children from psychological abuse (20%), physical abuse (12%), threats (10%), neglect (7%), or sexual violence (4%) (Table 7.6).

Table 7.6**Reasons for seeking shelters, Canada, April 16, 2008**

Reasons	Women residing in shelters	
	number	% ¹
Psychological abuse	2,798	65.0
Physical abuse	2,349	55.0
Threats	1,658	39.0
Financial abuse	1,550	36.0
Harassment	1,209	28.0
Sexual abuse	1,040	24.0
Protection of children from		
Witnessing abuse of mother	1,065	25.0
Psychological abuse	842	20.0
Physical abuse	523	12.0
Threats	433	10.0
Neglect	314	7.0
Sexual abuse	171	4.0
Other types of abuse	368	9.0
Housing problem		
Unable to find affordable housing	1,379	32.0
Shorting-term housing problem	826	19.0
Housing emergency	525	12.0
Mental health problems	945	22.0
Drug and alcohol addiction	880	21.0
Other reasons - total	272	6.0
Reason unknown	31	1.0
Total women residing in shelters	4,273	...

1. Due to multiple responses, the sum of the percentages does not equal 100.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2007/2008.

Female victims of homicide

Although homicide accounts for less than 1% of violent incidents reported to police, it is a critical marker for identifying changes in crime over time. Unlike non-lethal violence, most homicides are reported to police and as such are captured in official statistics.

According to Statistics Canada's Homicide Survey data for 1991 to 2009, overall rates of homicide against females were approximately half those of men (11 per million females compared to 21 per million males). Similar to non-lethal violence, females are most likely to be killed by a spouse or other intimate partner. In 2009, females accounted for 71% of victims of homicides perpetrated by a current spouse, 88% by a former spouse, and 78% involving other intimate partners. Females represent a smaller proportion of persons killed by other family members (37%), strangers (17%), and acquaintances (9%). Female victims also accounted for 19% of unsolved homicides in 2009.

Rates of homicide have declined substantially over the past 30 years, particularly for females.¹¹⁹ Much of this decrease can be attributed to a drop in homicides perpetrated by spouses. In 2009 female rates of spousal homicide were one third of those seen for women in 1979. A significant decline was also seen for men, with rates decreasing by more than half over this period (Chart 7.4). Some of the decline in rates of spousal homicide may be attributed to, among other factors, an increase in resources available to abused women, increased public awareness, and improvements in women's social and economic status that may enable them to leave abusive relationships at earlier stages.^{120, 121, 122} However, despite these marked improvements, the likelihood of being killed by a spouse remained more than double for females than for males in 2009 (with .46 per million females killed compared to .17 per million males).

Chart 7.4
Spousal homicide rates, by sex of the victim, 1979 to 2009



Notes: Spouses include legally married, common-law, separated, and divorced persons age 15 years or older. Excludes same-sex spouses due to the unavailability of Census data on same-sex couples.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

119. Beattie, S. and A. Cotter. 2010. "Homicide in Canada, 2009. *Juristat*. Vol. 30, no. 3. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2010003/article/11352-eng.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

120. Dawson, M., V. Pottie Bunge and T. Baldé. 2009. "National Trends in intimate partner homicides: Explaining declines in Canada, 1976 to 2001." *Violence Against Women*. Vol. 15, no. 3. P. 276-306.

121. Johnson, H. 2006. *Measuring Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends 2006*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-570-XIE. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-570-x/85-570-x2006001-eng.pdf> (Accessed February 6, 2011).

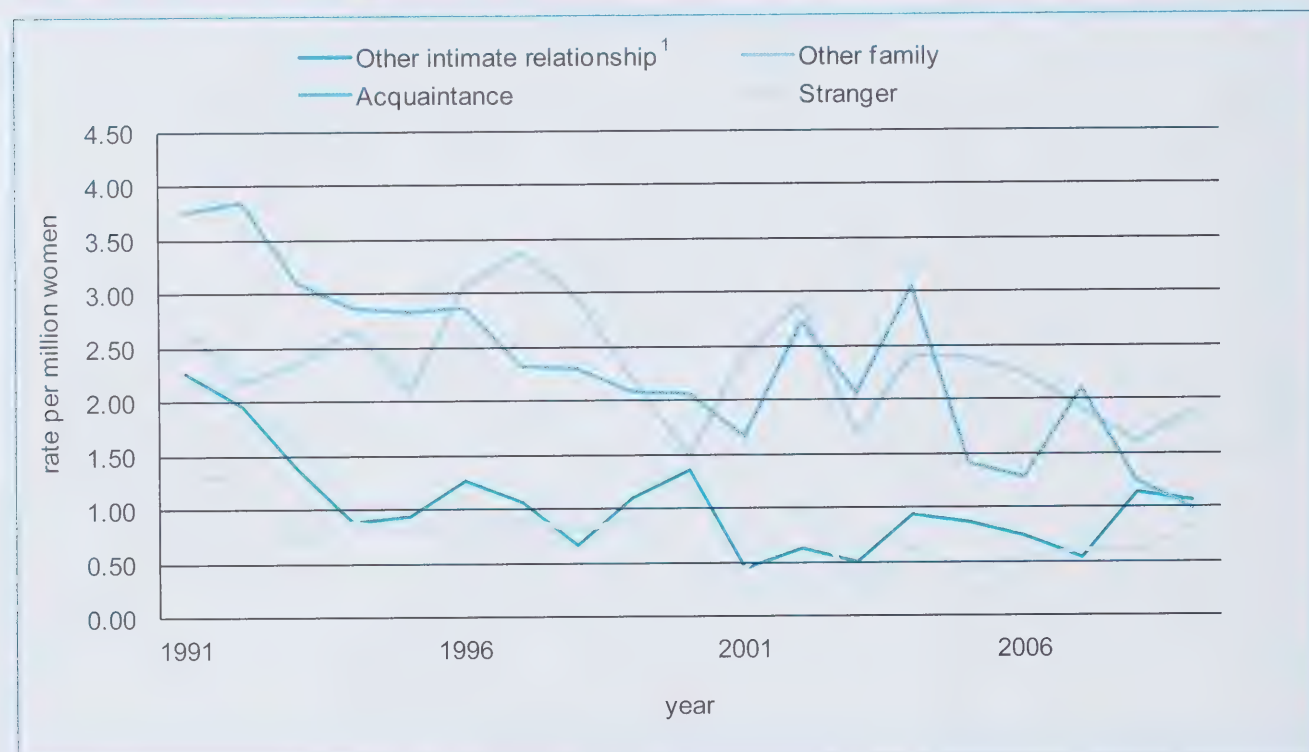
122. Dawson, M. 2001. "Examination of Declining Intimate Partner Homicide Rates: A Literature Review." *Research Report*, 2001-10. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, Research and Statistics Division.

A decline in the homicide rate was also seen for other victim-offender relationships, particularly among women. From 1991 to 2009, the rate of females killed by an acquaintance declined 73%, homicides perpetrated by other intimate partners declined 53%, and those perpetrated by strangers declined 39% (Chart 7.5). Females killed by other family members such as a parent, step-parent, sibling, or other extended family also saw some decline, but the variation in rates across time makes the trends more difficult to interpret.¹²³ Similar declines were not observed for men, with the exception of homicides by acquaintances, which decreased by 34% over the 1990's (Chart 7.6).

(Refer to the chapter "First Nations, Métis and Inuit Women in Canada" for discussion on Aboriginal female victims of homicide).

Chart 7.5

Female homicide rate by relationship of the accused to the victim, 1991 to 2009



1. Other Intimate relationships include dating relationships as well as "other intimate relationships".

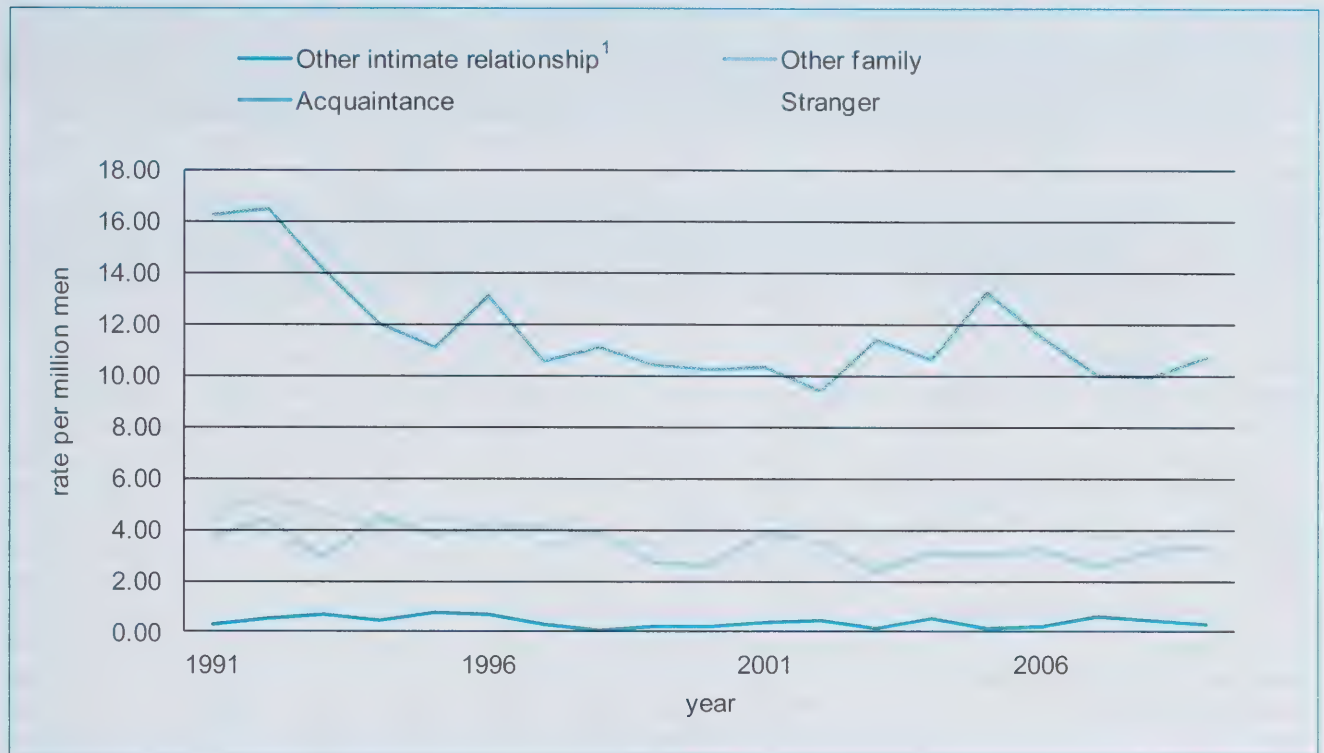
Note: Incidents in which the accused-victim relationship is unknown are not included.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Homicide Survey, 1991 to 2009.

123. When interpreting homicide trends it is important to be mindful of the fact that small changes in the number of homicides in a given year can have considerable impact on annual rates. Consequently, it is important to consider more than percentage changes over time but at variability in rates, as well as the base rates from which the trend begins.

Chart 7.6

Male homicide rate by relationship of the accused to the victim, 1991 to 2009



1. Other Intimate relationships include dating relationships as well as "other intimate relationships".

Note: Incidents in which the accused-victim relationship is unknown are not included.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Homicide Survey, 1991 to 2009.

Female offenders in Canada

Much of our knowledge of female offenders in Canada is taken from administrative data sources, which record criminal incidents that are reported to police, or are processed through the courts and correctional systems. However these data sources may underestimate the incidents of female offending due to the fact that not all incidents are brought to the attention of the police. According to a youth self-reported delinquency study, only a small fraction of crimes perpetrated by both boys and girls were reported to police.¹²⁴

In 2009, approximately 233,000 females and 776,000 males (adult and youth) were accused by police of having committed a *Criminal Code* offence in Canada. Females accounted for more than one quarter (28%) of youth (under 18 years of age) accused by police and more than one fifth (22%) of adult accused. The most common offences for which females were accused were theft under \$5,000, assault level 1, and administration of justice violations (e.g. failure to appear in court, breach of probation, etc.).

Female youth crime rates were, on average, triple those of adult women. For example, rates of assault level 1 were 579 per 100,000 female youth compared to 190 per 100,000 adult females. Rates of female youth offending exceeded those of female adults across all offence categories, with the exception of homicide or other violations causing death, fraud, traffic violations, and prostitution (Table 7.7).

124. Savoie, J. 2007. "Youth self-reported delinquency, Toronto, 2006". *Juristat*. Vol. 27, no. 6. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/85-002-x2007006-eng.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

Table 7.7**Number and rate of youth and adults accused by police, by sex and type of crime, 2009**

Criminal code violations	Total accused		Female accused			Male accused			
	number	Total	Total	Youth	Adult	Total	Total	Youth	Adult
Total Criminal Code violations (including traffic)	1,008,615	233,074	1,580.3	4,010.8	1,360.3	775,541	5,403.1	9,700.4	4,981.4
Violent Criminal Code violations	287,362	63,314	429.3	1,065.7	371.7	224,048	1,560.9	2,581.6	1,460.8
Homicide	530	55	0.4	0.4	0.4	475	3.3	5.6	3.1
Attempted murder	564	79	0.5	1.2	0.5	485	3.4	4.1	3.3
Other violations causing death	65	11	0.1	0.0	0.1	54	0.4	0.2	0.4
Sexual assaults - all levels	10,695	253	1.7	5.4	1.4	10,442	72.7	146.7	65.5
Other sexual violations ¹	1,729	72	0.5	2.5	0.3	1,657	11.5	24.2	10.3
Assault - level 3 - aggravated	3,132	496	3.4	5.1	3.2	2,636	18.4	28.7	17.4
Assault - level 2 - weapon or bodily harm	37,301	8,140	55.2	107.7	50.4	29,161	203.2	391.4	184.7
Assault - level 1	131,144	32,788	222.3	579.3	190.0	98,356	685.2	996.3	654.7
Other assaults ²	11,852	2,956	20.0	45.3	17.8	8,896	62.0	74.8	60.7
Forcible confinement, kidnapping or abduction ³	4,446	403	2.7	3.9	2.6	4,043	28.2	20.7	28.9
Robbery	14,500	1,742	11.8	49.5	8.4	12,758	88.9	305.4	67.6
Extortion	869	130	0.9	1.3	0.8	739	5.1	11.3	4.5
Criminal harassment	13,414	2,965	20.1	38.8	18.4	10,449	72.8	64.7	73.6
Threatening or harassing phone calls	9,125	3,650	24.7	31.8	24.1	5,475	38.1	50.0	37.0
Uttering threats	45,474	9,195	62.3	185.5	51.2	36,279	252.7	417.1	236.6
Other violent Criminal Code violations ⁴	2,522	379	2.6	8.0	2.1	2,143	14.9	40.3	12.4
Property Crime violations	356,908	97,590	661.7	2,205.4	522.0	259,318	1,806.6	5,168.3	1,476.8
Arson	2,153	290	2.0	14.1	0.9	1,863	13.0	87.5	5.7
Break and Enter	42,254	4,799	32.5	137.3	23.1	37,455	260.9	787.7	209.3
MV Theft	15,192	2,644	17.9	71.6	13.1	12,548	87.4	274.1	69.1
Theft over \$ 5,000	2,286	632	4.3	6.4	4.1	1,654	11.5	14.9	11.2
Theft \$5000 or under	130,001	47,747	323.7	1,334.7	232.2	82,254	573.0	1,786.5	454.0
Possession of Stolen Goods	33,426	8,422	57.1	204.1	43.8	25,004	174.2	483.4	143.9
Fraud	32,000	10,699	72.5	63.0	73.4	21,301	148.4	107.8	152.4
Mischief	99,596	22,357	151.6	374.1	131.4	77,239	538.1	1,626.4	431.3
Other Criminal Code violations	271,223	57,208	387.9	704.0	359.3	214,015	1,491.0	1,814.2	1,459.3
Prostitution	3,003	1,351	9.2	1.3	9.9	1,652	11.5	0.6	12.6
Administration of Justice Violations	160,750	32,286	218.9	415.9	201.1	128,464	895.0	1,033.7	881.4
Other CCC Violations	107,470	23,571	159.8	286.9	148.3	83,899	584.5	779.9	565.3
Total Criminal Code traffic violations	93,122	14,962	101.4	35.6	107.4	78,160	544.5	136.3	584.6
Other federal statutes	113,898	19,542	132.5	411.3	107.3	94,356	657.4	1,493.0	575.4
Drug offences	96,400	15,419	104.5	236.1	92.6	80,981	564.2	1,081.0	513.5
Other federal statutes violations	17,498	4,123	28.0	175.2	14.6	13,375	93.2	412.0	61.9

1. Other sexual violations primarily include sexual offences against children as well as other sexual offences involving adults.

2. Includes assaults against peace officers, unlawfully causing bodily harm, criminal negligence causing bodily harm, and other assaults.

3. Includes forcible confinement, kidnapping; abduction under 14, not parent/guardian; abduction under 16; removal of children from Canada; abduction under 14 contravening a custody order; abduction under 14, by parent/guardian.

4. Includes firearm violations. Excludes other sexual violations involving adults.

Notes: One incident may involve multiple violations. Counts are based upon the most serious violation in the incident. Incidents where the age or sex of the victim is unknown were excluded.**Sources:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Incident-Based Survey, 2009.

Similar to their victimization, females are most likely to commit acts of violence against their spouses or other intimate partners. In 2009, among those females accused of a violent offence, the most common victim was a spouse or other intimate partner (46%), followed by an acquaintance (29%), a stranger (14%), and lastly other family members (12%) (Table 7.8).

Table 7.8

Violent crimes perpetrated by females, by relationship of the accused to the victim, 2009

Type of violent crime	Current/former spouse ⁵		Intimate relationship ⁶		Other family ⁷		Acquaintance ⁸		Stranger		Total	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
Homicide	13	36.1	2	5.6	8	22.2	9	25.0	4	11.1	36	100.0
Attempted murder	8	25.0	4	12.5	8	25.0	9	28.1	3	9.4	32	100.0
Other violations causing death	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	40.0	2	40.0	5	100.0
Sexual assaults - all levels	4	5.8	5	7.2	17	24.6	39	56.5	4	5.8	69	100.0
Other sexual violations ¹	0	0.0	1	5.6	8	44.4	9	50.0	0	0.0	18	100.0
Assault - level 3 - aggravated	47	19.4	58	24.0	44	18.2	67	27.7	26	10.7	242	100.0
Assault - level 2 - weapon or bodily harm	1,194	30.6	1,012	26.0	512	13.1	887	22.8	291	7.5	3,896	100.0
Assault - level 1	2,764	25.1	2,879	26.1	1,254	11.4	3,084	28.0	1,034	9.4	11,015	100.0
Other assaults ²	16	1.4	14	1.3	17	1.5	250	22.6	808	73.1	1,105	100.0
Forcible confinement, kidnapping or abduction ³	14	14.4	16	16.5	45	46.4	17	17.5	5	5.2	97	100.0
Robbery	4	1.2	4	1.2	10	3.1	96	29.4	212	65.0	326	100.0
Extortion	0	0.0	2	9.5	2	9.5	14	66.7	3	14.3	21	100.0
Criminal harassment	120	21.7	130	23.6	43	7.8	220	39.9	39	7.1	552	100.0
Threatening or harassing phone calls	32	20.8	35	22.7	12	7.8	53	34.4	22	14.3	154	100.0
Uttering threats	237	14.5	134	8.2	216	13.2	880	53.9	165	10.1	1,632	100.0
Other violent <i>Criminal Code</i> violations ⁴	9	13.4	5	7.5	21	31.3	25	37.3	7	10.4	67	100.0
Total	4,463	23.2	4,301	22.3	2,217	11.5	5,661	29.4	2,625	13.6	19,267	100.0

1. Other sexual violations primarily include sexual offences against children as well as other sexual offences involving adults.

2. Includes assaults against peace officers, unlawfully causing bodily harm, criminal negligence causing bodily harm, and other assaults.

3. Includes forcible confinement, kidnapping; abduction under 14, not parent/guardian; abduction under 16; removal of children from Canada; abduction under 14 contravening a custody order; abduction under 14, by parent/guardian.

4. Includes firearm violations. Excludes other sexual violations involving adults.

5. Includes common-law relationships.

6. Includes current and former dating relationships as well as "other intimate relationships" such as extra-marital lovers. In some cases, the victim and the accused were living together at the time of the offence.

7. Includes siblings and all others related by blood, marriage (including common-law), adoption or foster care.

8. Includes friends, neighbours, authority figures, business relationships as well as criminal relationships (such as prostitutes, drug dealers and their clients).

Notes: One incident may involve multiple violations. Counts are based upon the most serious violation against the victim. Incidents where the relationship of the accused to the victim is unknown were excluded.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Incident-Based Survey, 2009.

This pattern is considerably different than that of male offenders, wherein most violent offences are perpetrated against acquaintances. For example, looking specifically at homicide offences, we see that in the period between 1997 to 2009, females were most likely to kill another member of their family (35%) or an intimate partner (33%), whereas men were most likely to kill an acquaintance (46%), followed by an intimate partner (19%), stranger (17%) or other family member (17%) (Table 7.9).

Table 7.9

Females and males accused of homicide, by relationship of the accused to the victim, 1997 to 2009

Relationship of accused to victim accused was:	Female accused		Male accused	
	number	%	number	%
Total solved homicides	677	100.0	5,195	100.0
Intimate relationship	226	33.4	973	18.7
Spouse ¹	172	25.4	553	10.6
(ex) Spouse ¹	21	3.1	211	4.1
Other intimate relationship ²	33	4.9	209	4.0
Family (non-spousal)	236	34.9	880	16.9
Parent	159	23.5	297	5.7
Child	32	4.7	230	4.4
Other family	45	6.6	353	6.8
Acquaintances	178	26.3	2,411	46.4
Criminal relationship	21	3.1	563	10.8
Casual acquaintance	102	15.1	1,177	22.7
Other acquaintance	55	8.1	671	12.9
Other	37	5.5	931	17.9
Stranger	36	5.3	886	17.1
Unknown	1	0.1	45	0.9

1. Includes common-law relationships.

2. Includes current and former dating relationships as well as "other intimate relationships" such as extra-marital lovers.

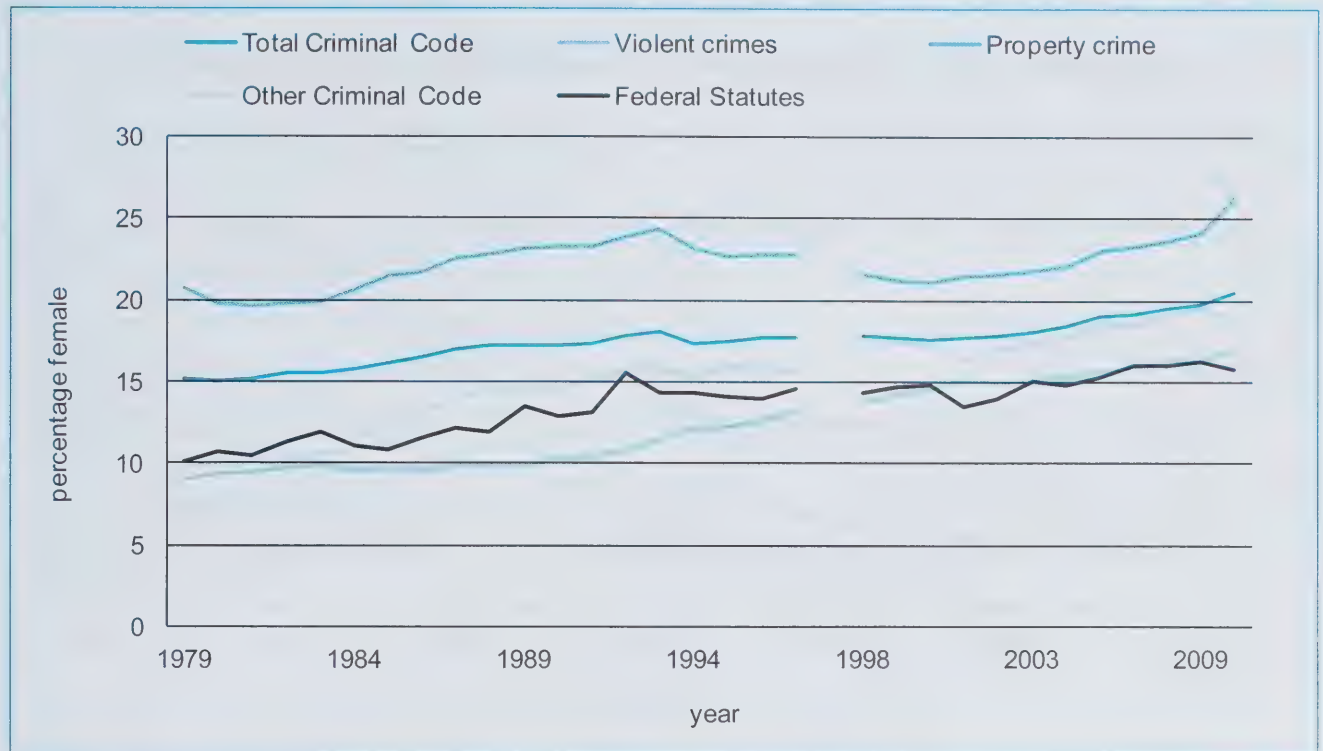
Source: Statistics Canada, Homicide Survey, 1997 to 2009.

Trends in female perpetrated crime

The proportion of women charged with criminal activity has increased over the past three decades. In 2009, women made up just over one-fifth (21%) of all adults charged with a *Criminal Code* offence, up from 15% in 1979. A similar increase can be found across offence categories (Chart 7.7). However, trends that focus on the relative proportion of female offenders should be interpreted with caution.

Chart 7.7

Women as a percentage of adults charged with *Criminal Code* offences, 1979 to 2009



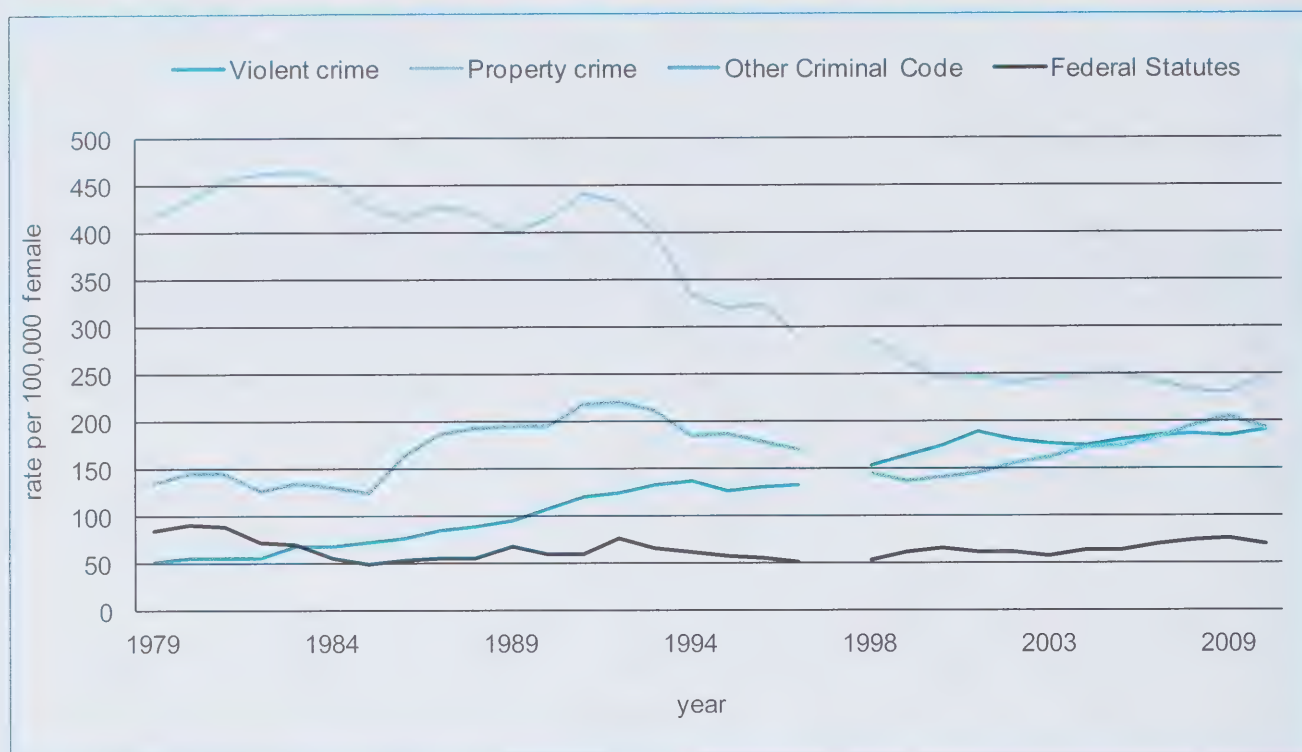
Notes: Due to the introduction of revised offence category definitions to better reflect those used by the policing community, there is a break in the series in 1998. Data excludes traffic violations.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Uniform Crime Reporting (Aggregate) Survey, 1979 to 2009.

For example, the increase in the proportion of female offenders charged with property crime can be attributed to a substantial decline in property offences by males. Male rates of property crime decreased by 37% from 1979 to 1997, and again by 34% from 1998 to 2009 (Chart 7.9). In fact, during this same time period female rates of property crime also declined, but to a lesser degree, falling 30% for the first part of the trend and 13% between 1998 and 2009 (Chart 7.8).

Chart 7.8

Rate of adult females charged by police by offence category, 1979 to 2009

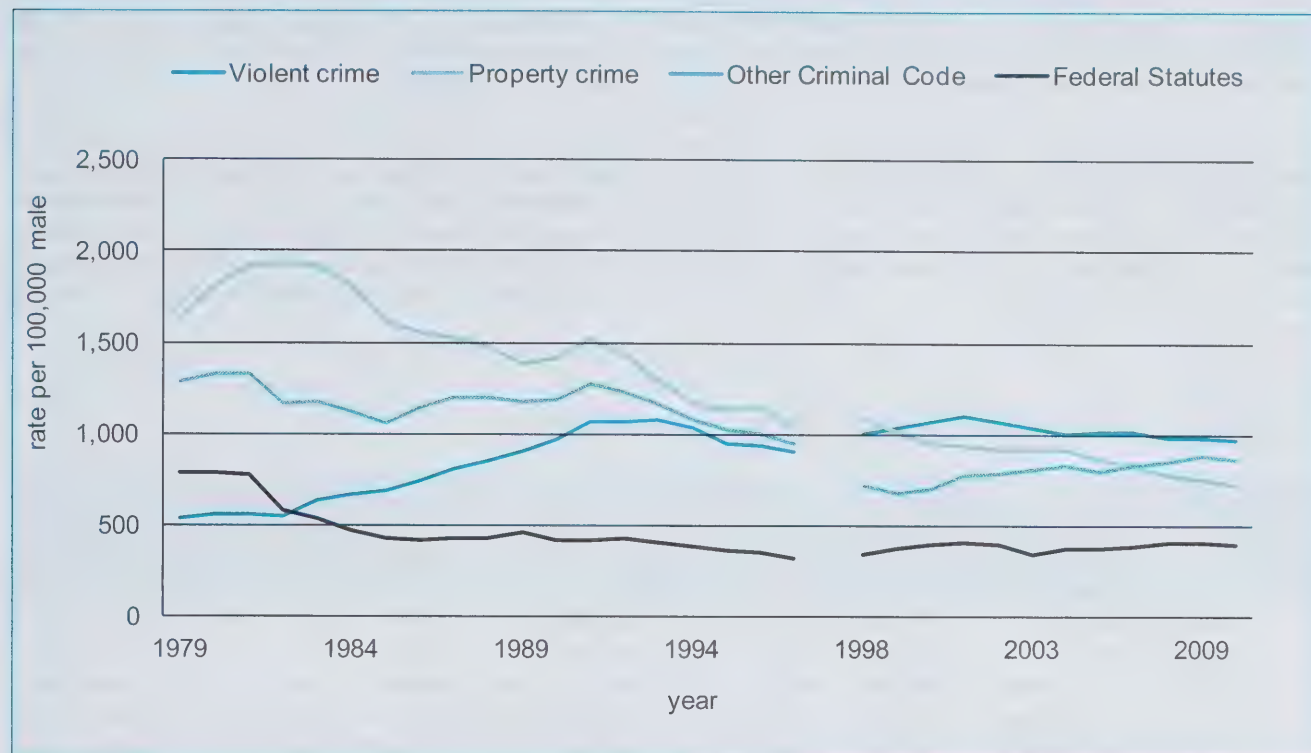


Notes: Due to the introduction of revised offence category definitions to better reflect those used by the policing community, there is a break in the series in 1998. Data excludes traffic violations.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Uniform Crime Reporting (Aggregate) Survey, 1979 to 2009.

Chart 7.9

Rate of adult males charged by police by offence category, 1979 to 2009



Notes: Due to the introduction of revised offence category definitions to better reflect those used by the policing community, there is a break in the series in 1998. Data excludes traffic violations.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Uniform Crime Reporting (Aggregate) Survey, 1979 to 2009.

Despite these declines in property crime, there have been increases in violent crime rates particularly among adult females. The rate at which women have been charged with violent offences has increased over the past 30 years. Rates almost tripled between 1979 and 1997, and continued to increase until 2001 after which time they have remained fairly stable. Rates among men increased 71% between 1979 and 1997, but have remained fairly stable after 1998. Most of the increase in female rates of violent crime can be attributed to an increase in the charge rate for assault level 1. While rates of men charged with assault level 1 have decreased since the early 1990s, women's rates have more than doubled, narrowing the gap between the number of females charged with violent crimes and the number of males charged.¹²⁵

Despite the rise in police-reported violent crimes perpetrated by adult females, we do not see these trends in homicide. According to results of the Homicide Survey, while the number of men accused of homicide has remained stable, the number of women accused of homicide decreased over the 1997 to 2009 reference period. Whether the rise in adult female rates of police-reported violent crime reflects an actual increase in female offending or a change in enforcement practices cannot be determined from the data presented here.

125. Kong, R. and K. AuCoin. 2008. "Female Offenders in Canada". *Juristat*. Vol 28, no. 1. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2008001/article/10509-eng.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

Female offenders in the courts¹²⁶

Since females are less likely than males to be charged with criminal offences, they also account for a smaller proportion of those dealt with by adult and youth courts. In 2008/2009, as in previous years, less than one quarter of completed court cases involved a female accused. Approximately 18% of cases disposed of in adult criminal courts involved a female accused, as did 23% completed in youth courts.

The types of offences for which females had the highest involvement were similar for adults and youth, and have changed very little over the past five years.¹²⁷ Most adult court cases with a female accused involved property offences (32%), crimes against the person (22%) and administration of justice offences (20%). Of all completed youth court cases involving a female accused in 2008/2009, property crimes and crimes against the person made up a higher proportion of cases (40% and 28% respectively). The next highest category, at 16% of cases, was "other" federal statutes, a group that includes offences under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) (Table 7.10).

Table 7.10
Cases completed in adult and youth court, 2008/2009

Offence category ¹	Adult Court					Youth Court				
	Total	Females		Males		Total	Females		Males	
		number	%	number	%		number	%	number	%
Crimes against the person	94,004	13,987	21.5	73,906	24.4	15,457	3,528	28.3	10,921	25.9
Crimes against property	91,923	20,797	32.0	66,710	22.0	22,001	4,983	40.0	15,741	37.4
Administration of justice offences	82,573	13,223	20.3	63,047	20.8	6,284	1,491	12.0	4,248	10.1
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> offences	18,676	2,360	3.6	15,061	5.0	3,021	321	2.6	2,437	5.8
<i>Criminal Code</i> traffic offences	56,841	7,758	11.9	45,371	15.0	1,127	150	1.2	904	2.1
Other federal statute ² offences	48,890	6,887	10.6	38,953	12.9	10,489	1,984	15.9	7,846	18.6
Total offences	392,907	65,012	100.0	303,048	100.0	58,379	12,457	100.0	42,097	100.0

1. The primary unit of analysis is the case. It combines all charges against the same person having one or more key overlapping dates (date of offence, date of initiation, date of first appearance, date of decision, date of sentencing) into a single case.

2. Federal statute offences refer to offences against Canadian federal statutes, such as the *Customs Act*, the *Employment Insurance Act*, the *Firearms Act*, *Food and Drugs Act* (FDA), the *Income Tax Act* and the *Narcotic Control Act* (NCA). This offence category excludes *Criminal Code* of Canada offences.

Notes: The sex of the accused is not available for the province of Manitoba at this time. For adult court data, sex is determined on the basis of the accused's name in Quebec, producing a relatively higher rate of sex unknown.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Court Survey and Adult Criminal Court Survey.

126. Cases where the sex of the accused was unknown have been removed from this analysis, as have cases in which a company was the accused. Manitoba is excluded, as it does not report on the sex of the accused. This analysis is based on cases completed in adult and youth court.

127. Kong, R. and K. AuCoin. 2008. "Female Offenders in Canada". *Juristat*. Vol 28, no. 1. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2008001/article/10509-eng.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

As one might expect, the most serious charge¹²⁸ for which women and girls were in court closely resembles the offences commonly reported to police. The most serious charge in adult court cases involving a female accused included theft (17%), assault level 1 (11%), impaired driving (10%), failure to comply with a court order (9%), breach of probation (7%) and fraud (7%). Combined, these 6 offences accounted for more than 60% of all cases disposed of in adult criminal courts. Theft and assault level 1 were also the most common offences for which females were in youth court (accounting for 21% and 14% of completed cases respectively), followed by *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) offences (11%) and failure to comply with a court order (8%).

The number of completed adult court cases involving a male accused exceeded those involving a female accused across all offence categories. The highest representation of females was found in cases of prostitution (31%), fraud (31%) and theft (30%). Females also accounted for one in five cases involving the charges of failure to appear in court or other administration of justice offences, drug trafficking, possession of stolen property, and assault level 1 and major assault.¹²⁹

In 2008/2009, adult court cases involving a female accused were less likely to lead to a guilty finding¹³⁰, and when there was a finding of guilt, were less likely to receive a sentence of custody. For example, in 2008/2009, 59% of all completed cases involving women ended in a guilty finding, compared to 68% for men. A further 37% of cases involving a female accused were resolved by being stayed or withdrawn, compared to 28% for males.

There are several possible factors that influence the proportion of cases found guilty. Compared to males, cases involving a female accused were also less likely to involve multiple charges (62% versus 55%). Past research suggests that an accused is generally more likely to plead guilty to at least one charge when faced with multiple charges. Further, some cases are stayed or withdrawn pending the completion of diversion programs for first time offenders, and prior research suggests that females are more likely than males to be one-time offenders.¹³¹

Upon conviction, women were less likely than men to receive a prison sentence (26% versus 37%) (Chart 7.10) and when custody was ordered, median sentence lengths were generally shorter for adult females than adult males. The lower incarceration rates for women held true across offences with the exception of being unlawfully at large, prostitution, disturbing the peace, drug possession, and YCJA offences¹³² (where women found guilty were equally or more likely than men to receive an order of custody).

128. When a case has more than one charge, the most serious offence is selected to represent the case. For a description of the methodology used to determine the most serious offence, see J. Thomas, "Adult Criminal Court Statistics, 2008-2009." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Vol. 30, no.2. Ottawa.

129. Major assault is an offence category that includes the higher levels of assault in the *Criminal Code*: assault with a weapon (Assault Level II, section 267), aggravated assault (Assault Level III, section 268) and other assaults (assaulting a police officer, and unlawfully causing bodily harm).

130. However, these differences do vary by province. The percentage of women found guilty was comparable to those of men in Newfoundland and Labrador as well as Yukon Territory.

131. Kong, R. and K. AuCoin. 2008. "Female Offenders in Canada". *Juristat*. Vol 28, no. 1. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2008001/article/10509-eng.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

132. Although the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) is legislation governing criminal justice of young persons, there are several offences in the Act under which an adult can be charged such as: s. 136(a) inducing a young person to leave unlawfully a place of custody, s. 136(c) harbouring a young person who has left a place of custody, s. 136(d) inducing or assisting a young person to breach or disobey a term or condition of a youth sentence, etc. See J. Thomas, "Adult Criminal Court Statistics, 2008-2009." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Vol. 30, no.2. Ottawa.

Chart 7.10

Guilty cases by sex and type of sentence, adult criminal court, Canada, 2008/2009



1. In 2008/2009, conditional sentencing data were not available for Quebec.

2. "Other" sentences include absolute and conditional discharge, suspended sentence, community service order and prohibition order among others.

Notes: Cases can have more than one sentence. As such, the sentence types presented are not mutually exclusive and will not add to 100. Probation total include mandatory probation for cases given a conditional discharge *Canadian Criminal Code* (C.C.C.s.730(1)) or a suspended sentence *Canadian Criminal Code* (C.C.C.x.731(1)(a)). In Quebec, most drug offences are recorded under residual federal statutes, resulting in an undercount of drug possession and drug trafficking cases and an overcount of residual federal statute cases. Coverage for Adult Criminal Court Survey data as of 2008/2009 is estimated at 95% of adult criminal court caseload.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Centre for Justice Statistics, Adult Criminal Court Survey.

Trends in adult and youth criminal courts

There has been a small increase in the number of adult criminal court cases disposed of in the 10 reporting jurisdictions between 2000/2001 and 2008/2009. Some of this increase can be attributed to a steady rise in cases involving a female accused. The number of cases involving a female accused increased 18% from 2000/2001 to 2008/2009 (Chart 7.11). Following a 4-year downward trend in the number of cases disposed beginning in 2003/2004; the number of cases involving a male accused increased by 3% in 2007/2008 and dropped slightly the following year. An increase in the number of cases involving a female accused was found across all provinces for which adult court data were available¹³³, with the exception of Newfoundland and Labrador, which saw a small decline.

Chart 7.11

Completed cases in adult court by sex of the accused, 10 jurisdictions, 2000/2001 to 2008/2009



Notes: The primary unit of analysis is the case. It combines all charges against the same person having one or more key overlapping dates (date of offence, date of initiation, date of first appearance, date of decision, date of sentencing) into a single case.

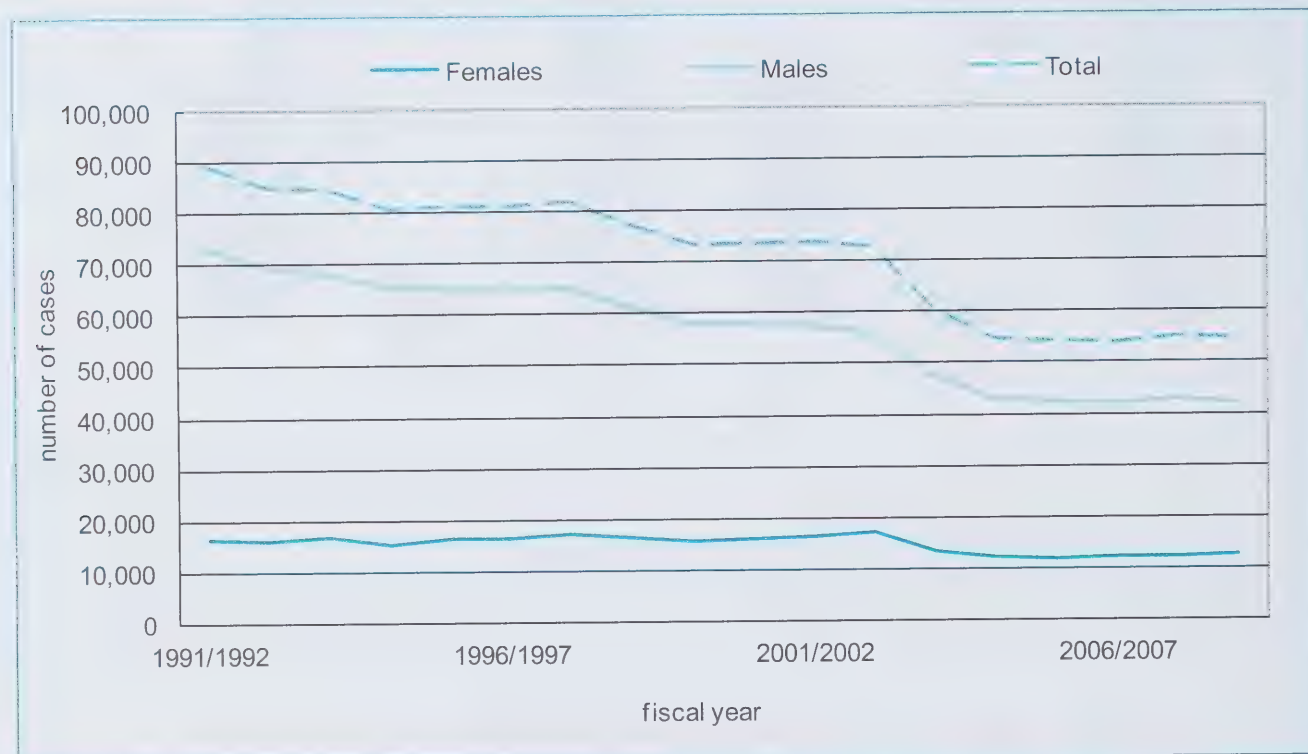
This trend analysis table does not include data from Manitoba, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. Coverage for the Adult Criminal Court Survey data for the ten jurisdictions is estimated at 90% adult criminal court caseload. Sex is determined on the basis of the accused's name in Quebec, producing a relatively higher rate of sex unknown.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Centre for Justice Statistics, Adult Criminal Court Survey.

133. The trend analysis does not include data from Manitoba, Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Trends in youth court caseload differ from those observed for adult court with a steady decline in the number of cases disposed involving both female and male accused. The number of cases involving a female accused decreased by 24% and the number of cases involving a male accused decreased by 42% since the trend data became available in 1991/1992 (Chart 7.12). This decline was fuelled by a steady decrease in the number of crimes against property cases (such as theft, break and enter and mischief). Some of this decline has also been attributed to the introduction of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) in 2003, which encourages the diversion of youth who have committed non-violent and minor crimes away from the formal court system. The number of cases completed in youth court has stabilized since 2004/2005, although there has been a small increase (5%) in the number of cases disposed involving female youth.

Chart 7.12
Substantial declines in youth court caseload



Notes: The primary unit of analysis is the case. It combines all charges against the same person having one or more key overlapping dates (date of offence, date of initiation, date of first appearance, date of decision, date of sentencing) into a single case.

This chart excludes Manitoba because data on the sex of the accused is not available for all time points. Sex is determined on the basis of the accused's name in Quebec, producing a relatively higher rate of sex unknown.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Court Survey.

Female offenders under correctional supervision

According to data from the Adult Correctional Services (ACS) Survey, approximately 9,425 adult women were admitted to sentenced custody in 2008/2009, representing 11% of all provincial/territorial admissions and 6% of federal admissions.¹³⁴ Women also represented 13% of the remand population (a court-ordered detention of a person while waiting for further court appearances). Furthermore, 18% of intakes to probation and 19% of intakes to conditional sentences were women (Table 7.11). Some provincial/territorial systems reported lower representation of adult females in sentenced custody than others, with a low of 6% in Nunavut to a high of 14% in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Table 7.11
Adults admitted to correctional services, 2008/2009

Province	Sentenced Custody		Remand		Probation		Conditional Sentence	
	total number ¹	% female ²	total number ¹	% female ²	total number ¹	% female ²	total number ¹	% female ²
Newfoundland and Labrador	986	9.1	492	10.8	1,501	17.5	368	23.7
Prince Edward Island	648	9.6	268	10.1	605	15.4	49	..
Nova Scotia	1,669	9.6	3,124	12.8	3,400	19.7	784	18.1
New Brunswick	2,323	11.2	1,937	11.0	1,772	19.4	643	21.8
Quebec	7,725	8.9	29,677	9.3	9,659	14.8	4,093	15.1
Ontario	31,370	10.2	63,738	13.6	37,093	18.3	5,301	22.1
Manitoba	3,804	8.8	9,782	14.3	6,471	19.7	1,155	20.8
Saskatchewan	3,620	14.3	5,925	9.6	3,962	23.1	1,575	19.5
Alberta	18,509	14.1	23,970	13.7	9,159	18.4	1,324	20.3
British Columbia	9,544	11.1	13,518	13.5	10,342	18.8	3,038	18.1
Yukon	226	11.9	392	13.8	317	19.6	74	31.1
Northwest Territories	611	10.1	520	9.0	..	..	..	..
Nunavut	771	5.7	431	7.7	..	..	..	..
Provincial/territorial total	81,806	11.1	153,774	12.6	84,281	18.3	18,404	19.3
Federal total³	4,911	6.4	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	86,717	10.9	...	...	...	...	...	...

1. Includes cases where gender is unknown.

2. Percentage calculations exclude cases where gender is unknown.

3. Warrant of Committal admissions.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Adult Correctional Services Survey and Integrated Correctional Services Survey.

134. The administration of correctional services in Canada is a shared responsibility of the federal, provincial and territorial governments. Which adult offenders are placed in the federal system and which are placed in the provincial/territorial system depend on decisions taken by the judiciary. Adult offenders sentenced to custody terms of two years or more fall under the federal penitentiary system. Sentences of less than two years and community-based sanctions, such as probation and conditional sentences, are the responsibility of the provinces and territories.

Consistent with findings from police and court surveys, data from the Youth Custody and Community Services (YCCS) Survey show that the relative proportion of females admitted to correctional services is notably higher among youth than adults. In 2008/2009, young females comprised 17% of youth admitted to sentenced custody. Further, among the youth under correctional supervision 21% of female youth were admitted to remand and 24% were admitted to probation (Table 7.12). Females as a proportion of youth admitted to sentenced custody varied by province, with female youth accounting for 38% of admissions in the Northwest Territories, 23% in New Brunswick, 20% in British Columbia and 19% in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Table 7.12
Youth admitted to correctional services, 2008/2009

Province	Sentenced Custody		Remand		Probation	
	total number ¹	% female ²	total number ¹	% female ²	total number ¹	% female ²
Newfoundland and Labrador	64	18.8	93	20.4	240	19.7
Prince Edward Island	..	...	..	...	..	...
Nova Scotia	130	14.6	274	14.2	..	...
New Brunswick	176	22.7	324	21.9	430	20.7
Quebec	1,032	...	2,542	...	4,487	...
Ontario	1,250	16.9	7,932	20.6	6,891	23.0
Manitoba	338	10.4	1,831	26.9	1,032	29.4
Saskatchewan	398	17.9	..	...	1,328	26.2
Alberta	..	...	..	...	1,865	23.3
British Columbia	325	19.7	1,167	25.1	1,432	25.3
Yukon	19	10.5	35	11.4	19	26.3
Northwest Territories	45	37.8	45	28.9	110	40.9
Nunavut	..	...	..	...	..	...
Provincial / territorial total	3,777	17.1	14,243	21.9	17,834	24.1

1. Includes cases where gender is unknown.

2. Percentage calculations exclude cases where gender is unknown.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Custody and Community Services Survey.

According to data from the provincial correctional systems¹³⁵ in Ontario, British Columbia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador, female youth were more likely to be serving time in custody for “other” *Criminal Code* and federal offences (54%) than for violent offences (27%) or property offences (20%). Male youth, on the other hand, were almost equally likely to be serving time in custody for a violent crime (36%) as “other” offences (35%). The other offences for which female youth were in custody were primarily offences under federal legislation including the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) (37%) as well as offences against the administration of justice (12%).

135. The composition of the provincial correctional system data reported here is taken from the Integrated Correctional Services Survey, and is based primarily on admissions to custody in Ontario (80.2%), followed by British Columbia (13.1%), New Brunswick (5.4%), and Newfoundland and Labrador (1.3%).

Trends in female admissions to custody

The number and proportion of adult female admissions to provincial/territorial custody and federal custody has increased between 1999/2000 and 2008/2009. Among the 9 reporting provincial and territorial jurisdictions¹³⁶, females represented 12% of admissions to remand, sentenced custody and other temporary detentions in 2008/2009, up from 10% in 1999/2000. Adult female admissions to federal custody have also increased, with females representing 6% of admissions in 2008/2009, up from 5% in 1999/2000.

The percentage of female youth admitted to sentenced custody has also increased in recent years. According to trend data from the Youth Custody and Community Services (YCCS) Survey, females represented 21% of youth admissions in the reporting provincial and territorial jurisdictions¹³⁷ in 2008/2009, up from 18% in 2003/2004.

Characteristics of women in custody

A 2008/2009 snapshot of women in provincial and federal custody suggest that incarcerated women are on average younger, more likely to be single, less likely to have a high school diploma, and more likely to be unemployed than women in the Canadian population. More than half of women in the reporting provincial institutions (56%) and in federal custody (53%) were between the ages of 18 and 35 compared to 28% in the general population in 2009. Similarly, more than half of females in custody were single and never married at the time of admission compared to 32% in the population.

Among female inmates in the reporting provincial institutions, 50% did not complete secondary school, whereas 43% had a high school diploma and 12% had completed some post-secondary education. In contrast, 2006 Census data show that less than 15% of women over the age of 25 did not complete secondary school, 25% had a high school diploma, and 61% reported having completed some post-secondary education. Among the reporting jurisdictions, less than one quarter of women (24%) reported being employed full or part-time at the time of their admission to provincial custody compared to 58% in the general population in 2006 (Table 7.13).

136. The Adult Correctional Services Survey trend data exclude admissions to custody in Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Alberta and Nunavut for all years. For this reason, estimates of the relative proportion of females in custody in 2008/2009 will differ from those presented in Table 11.

137. Trend data for the Youth Custody and Community Services Survey is only currently available for a six-year period from 2003/2004 to 2008/2009. These trend data exclude admissions to custody in Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Nunavut for all years. For this reason, estimates of the relative proportion of female youth in custody in 2008/2009 will differ from those presented in Table 12.

Table 7.13

Characteristics of adult women involved in provincial and federal correctional custodial services, 2008/2009

Characteristics	Provincial ¹ custody			Federal custody		
	total ²	number	%	total	number	%
Total persons	75,559	8,565	11.3	22,656	1,076	5.0
Aboriginal identity						
Aboriginal	10,727	1,665	19.5	4,234	311	28.9
Non-Aboriginal	64,457	6,867	80.5	18,422	765	71.1
Unknown	375	33	...	0	0	...
Age at last custodial status admission date						
Under 18	19	0	0	36	1	0.1
18 to 19	5,109	554	6.5	682	28	2.6
20 to 24	14,522	1,525	17.8	3,839	164	15.2
25 to 29	12,737	1,461	17.1	4,154	197	18.3
30 to 34	10,322	1,242	14.5	3,375	176	16.4
35 to 39	9,506	1,224	14.3	3,319	168	15.6
40 to 44	9,032	1,116	13.0	2,841	168	15.6
45 to 49	7,024	815	9.5	2,030	90	8.4
50 and over	7,264	626	7.3	2,380	84	7.8
Unknown	24	2	...	0	0	...
Marital status²						
Single (never married)	45,147	5,096	61.6	11,405	519	49.2
Married	8,089	664	8.0	1,807	89	8.4
Common-law	10,440	1,178	14.2	6,680	283	26.9
Separated/divorced	8,485	1,196	14.5	2,130	131	12.4
Widowed	416	134	1.6	295	32	3.0
Unknown	2,982	297	...	339	22	...
Education completed for age 25 and over³						
Primary school or less	1,202	126	14.4	.	.	...
Some secondary	2,646	314	35.8	.	.	...
Completed secondary	3,828	376	42.9	.	.	...
Some postsecondary	269	48	5.5	.	.	...
Completed postsecondary	640	60	6.8	.	.	...
Unknown	841	142	...	.	.	...
Employment status at admission³						
Unemployed (but able to work)	5,645	809	65.6	.	.	...
Employed (part-time, full-time)	4,899	292	23.7	.	.	...
Not employable – disabled, medical reasons, etc.	401	48	3.9	.	.	...
Not employed – retired, student, or other reason	990	156	12.7	.	.	...
Unknown	1,358	153	...	.	.	...

Table 7.13**Characteristics of adult women involved in provincial and federal correctional custodial services, 2008/2009 (continued)**

Characteristics	Provincial ¹ custody			Federal custody		
	total ²	number	%	total	number	%
Need indicated^{4,5}						
Substance abuse	4,631	569	93.7	15,097	705	73.9
Attitude	3,875	442	72.9	13,485	388	44.0
Family/marital	1,703	226	69.1	9,033	556	59.8
Personal/emotional	..	..	...	17,817	786	82.1
Social interaction	4,303	273	45.0	14,103	684	73.5
Employment	3,477	493	81.4	12,307	689	74.1
Community functioning	1,390	220	78.9	6,718	317	34.3
Number of needs indicated⁴						
0 to 1	193	15	2.5	629	29	3.0
2 to 3	1,149	96	15.8	6,916	308	32.0
4 or more	3,705	496	81.7	13,211	625	65.0
Most serious offence, last correctional status						
Violent offences	23,246	1,914	22.7	13,571	503	47.1
Property offences	13,119	1,935	23.0	3,265	173	16.2
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> offences (excludes traffic)	23,827	3,084	36.6	1,906	81	7.6
<i>Criminal Code</i> - traffic offences ⁶	5,092	348	4.1	863	30	2.8
Other federal statutes ⁷	6,946	1,032	12.3	2,913	280	26.2
Other offences ⁸	1,917	109	1.3	0	0	0
Unknown	1,412	143	...	138	8	...

1. Provincial custody data include the provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

2. Total provincial includes 75 cases where gender is unknown.

3. Provincial custody excludes Newfoundland and Labrador and Ontario due to missing data.

4. Needs analysis includes last assessment performed. Includes only those cases where need assessments were performed and need level is indicated as medium or high. Provincial custody includes Saskatchewan.

5. Includes only those cases in which needs were assessed. Need is indicated as being present when the need is assessed as medium or high. Maximum number of provincial needs available is 6 and minimum is 0. Maximum number of federal needs available is 7 and minimum is 0.

6. Includes impaired driving offences.

7. Includes drug offences and other federal statute violations.

8. Includes provincial/territorial offences and municipal bylaw infractions.

Notes: Percentage calculations excludes 'unknown'. Includes the most recent custodial status.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Correctional Services Survey.

The needs of offenders are evaluated for rehabilitative purposes upon entering custody. Almost all female offenders in provincial custody had multiple needs identified, particularly in the areas of substance abuse (94%), employment (81%) and community functioning (79%). The needs most commonly identified among female federal inmates include: personal/emotional problems (82%), employment, substance use, and social interactions (74%).

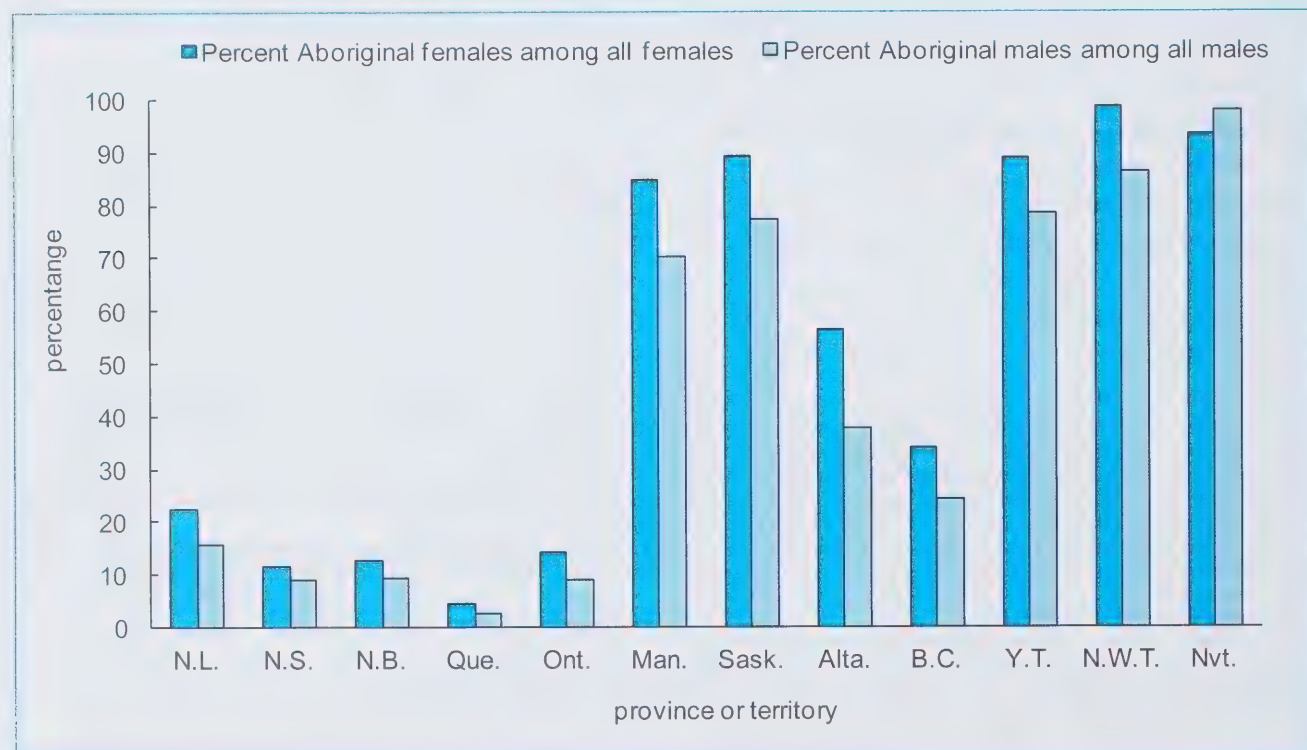
Representation of Aboriginal women under correctional supervision¹³⁸

The representation of Aboriginal women and men under correctional supervision has been well documented in recent years, and has steadily increased.¹³⁹ In 2008/2009, 35% of women and 23% of men admitted to adult sentenced custody identified as an Aboriginal person, while 2006 Census data show that Aboriginal women and men made up only 3% of the adult Canadian population. The representation of Aboriginal people in custody is even greater for women than men. This is apparent across Canada, albeit more pronounced in the western provinces and in the territories.

In 2008/2009, Aboriginal women comprised more than 85% of admissions of women to adult provincial sentenced custody in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and just over half in Alberta. Yet in 2006 Aboriginal adults represented only 11%, 12%, and 5% of these provincial populations respectively. Although Aboriginal people make up a larger proportion of the populations in the territories¹⁴⁰, they remain over-represented in territorial correctional facilities. In 2008/2009 Aboriginal women accounted for 89%, 93% and 98% of admissions to custody in Yukon, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories (Chart 7.13).

Chart 7.13

Proportion of adults admitted to sentenced custody who were Aboriginal, 2008/2009



Note: Data on the number of Aboriginal offenders admitted to sentenced custody is not available for Prince Edward Island for this reference period.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Centre for Justice Statistics, Adult Correctional Services Survey.

138. The definition of Aboriginal identity used in the Industry Classification Coding System was modeled after the definition within the Census. The concept of the Aboriginal population within the Census refers to those persons who reported identifying with at least one Aboriginal group (North American Indian, Métis, or Inuit). Also included are individuals who did not report an Aboriginal identity, but who reported being a Registered or Treaty Indian, and/or those who reported they were members of an Indian Band or First Nation. The Industry Classification Coding System collects Aboriginal identity information at admission to correctional services through self-identification.

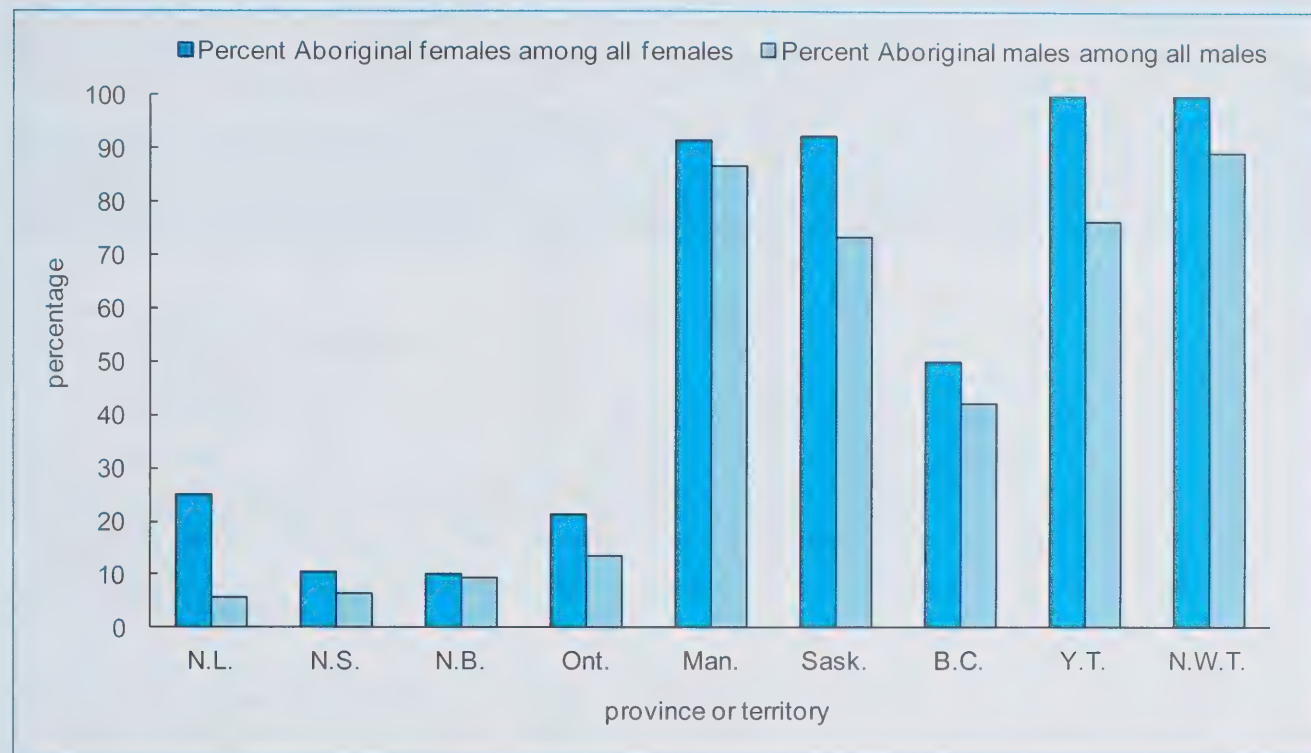
139. Perreault, S. 2009. "The incarceration of Aboriginal people in adult correctional services". *Juristat*. Vol 29, no. 3. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2009003/article/10903-eng.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

140. According to the most recent population estimates from the 2006 Census of Canada, approximately 22% of persons living in Yukon Territory, 45% in the Northwest Territories, and 78% in Nunavut self-identify themselves as an Aboriginal person.

Similar to Aboriginal adults, data from the Youth Custody and Community Services Survey (YCCS) show that Aboriginal youth were highly represented in admissions to all types of correctional services in 2008/2009. Among the nine reporting provinces and territories, Aboriginal females accounted for 44% of admissions to open or secure custody, 34% of admissions to remand, and 31% of admissions or intakes to probation. As seen for adult admissions, the representation of Aboriginal youth is greatest in the Yukon and Northwest Territories (100%), Saskatchewan (93%) and Manitoba (91%) (Chart 7.14).

Chart 7.14

Proportion of youth admitted to sentenced custody who were Aboriginal, 2008/2009



Note: Data on the number of Aboriginal offenders admitted to sentenced custody is not available for Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Alberta or Nunavut for this reference period.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Custody and Community Services Survey.

Previous research^{141,142} has found that the number of admissions to sentenced custody has decreased since the mid-1990's for both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal population. However, this decrease has been more substantial for non-Aboriginal adults, resulting in an increase in the proportional representation of Aboriginal people among sentenced custody admissions over the same time period.

Upon entering custody, offenders are evaluated for rehabilitative purposes. A higher proportion of Aboriginal women than non-Aboriginal women entering federal custody were assessed as having rehabilitative needs in a number of areas, including substance use, marital and family relationships, employment, and social interaction. Aboriginal women in federal custody were also more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be assessed as having needs in multiple areas. Approximately 66% of Aboriginal women in federal custody were assessed as having 5 or more rehabilitative needs compared to 38% of non-Aboriginal women. Previous research found the same to be true for Aboriginal men in custody.¹⁴³ The needs assessments suggest that a higher proportion of Aboriginal women and men could be at risk of re-offending and possibly returning to corrections services. This could be a contributing factor to the high representation of Aboriginal offenders in custody.¹⁴⁴

141. Perreault, S. 2009. "The incarceration of Aboriginal people in adult correctional services". *Juristat*. Vol 29, no. 3. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2009003/article/10903-eng.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

142. Brzozowski, J., A. Taylor-Butts, and S. Johnson. 2006. "Victimization and offending among the Aboriginal population in Canada." *Juristat*. Vol. 26, no. 3. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/85-002-x2006003-eng.pdf> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

143. Perreault, S. 2009. "The incarceration of Aboriginal people in adult correctional services". *Juristat*. Vol 29, no. 3. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Ottawa. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2009003/article/10903-eng.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2010).

144. Ibid.

Women in justice-related occupations

The number of women working in the criminal justice field has seen considerable growth over the past two decades (Box Table 7.1). According to *Census* data, women accounted for 25% of judges in 2006, almost double the proportion found in 1991 (14%). In addition, a larger share of lawyers and notaries (39%) were women in 2006 relative to 1991 (27%). In 2006, 59% of probation and parole officers and 32% of correctional service officers were women, up from 50% and 22% 15 years earlier. Women have long been prominent in paralegal and related occupations, representing 87% in 2006, up from 76% in 1991.

Box Table 7.1

Women as a percentage of those employed in justice-related occupations, 1991 to 2006

Occupation	1991		1996		2001		2006	
	number	% of total	number	% of total	number	% of total	number	% of total
Judges	345	14.0	495	20.0	620	21.0	700	25.0
Lawyers and notaries	14,845	27.0	18,465	31.0	23,185	35.0	30,385	39.0
Paralegal and related occupations	12,835	76.0	16,620	79.0	24,415	81.0	34,305	87.0
Probation and parole officers	1,885	50.0	2,275	47.0	3,735	54.0	3,550	59.0
Correctional service officers	3,960	22.0	4,725	25.0	5,415	29.0	6,440	32.0
Sworn officers ^{1,2}	3,964	7.0	5,634	10.4	8,273	14.5	11,211	17.9

1. Includes personnel who have obtained senior officer status, normally at the rank of lieutenant or higher, such as chiefs, deputy chiefs, staff superintendents, superintendents, staff inspectors, inspectors, lieutenants, and other equivalent ranks.

2. Includes personnel between the rank of constable and lieutenant, such as staff-sergeants, sergeants, detective-sergeants, corporals and all equivalent ranks.

Sources: Statistics Canada, *Census of Canada*, 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006 and Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, *Police Administration Survey*.

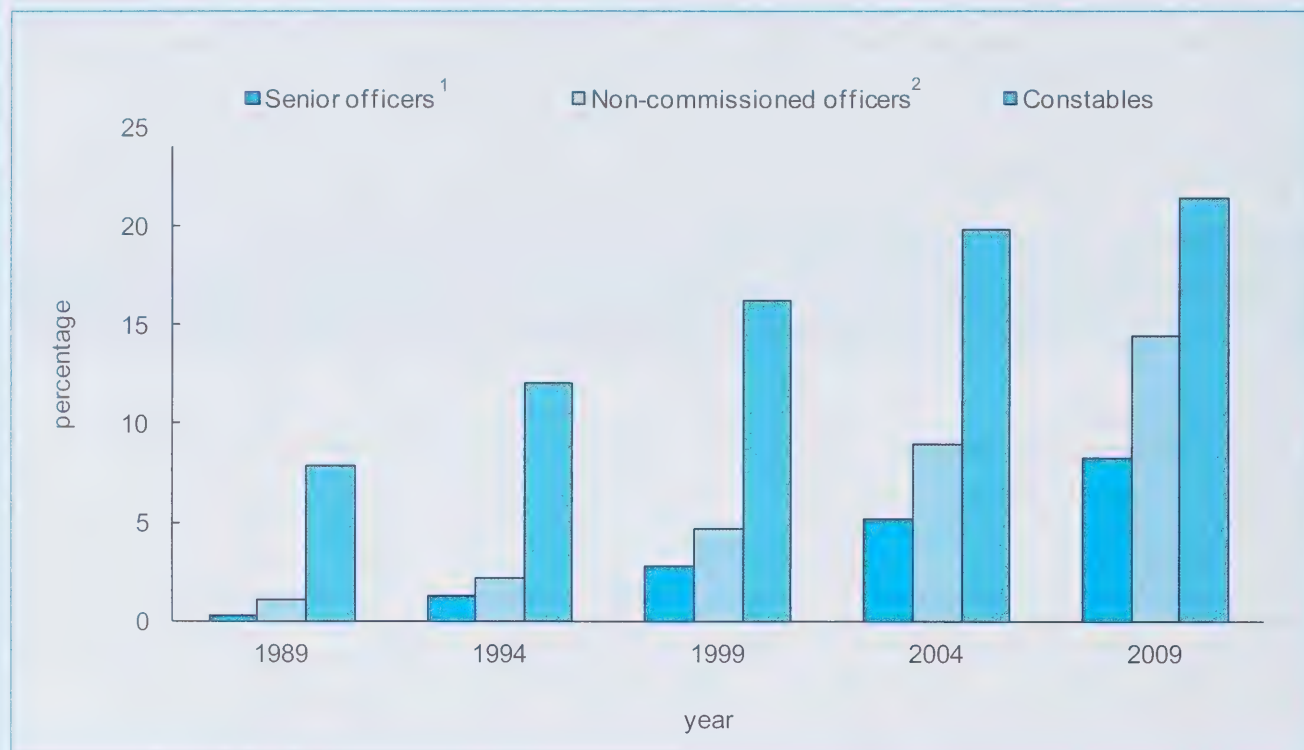
Although the representation of women in policing is proportionately lower than most other justice occupations, it too has seen real growth in recent years. In 2006, approximately 18% of sworn officers were women,¹⁴⁵ up from 14% in 2001 and 7% a decade earlier. According to results from the *Police Administration Survey (PAS)*, women have also made inroads in the senior ranks. From 2005 to 2009, while the proportion of female constables has remained relatively stable (21%), the proportion of women employed as senior officers increased from 5.5% to 8.3% and those employed as non-commissioned officers grew from 10% to 14% (Box Chart 7.1).

145. This proportion is similar to that of the United States, where 20% of officers were reported to be female in 2008.

Women in justice-related occupations (continued)

Box Chart 7.1

Women as a percentage of police officers, by level, 1989 to 2009



1. Includes personnel who have obtained senior officer status, normally at the rank of lieutenant or higher, such as chiefs, deputy chiefs, staff superintendents, superintendents, staff inspectors, inspectors, lieutenants, and other equivalent ranks.

2. Includes personnel between the rank of constable and lieutenant, such as staff-sergeants, sergeants, detective-sergeants, corporals and all equivalent ranks.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Police Administration Survey, 1989 to 2009.

Chapter 8

First Nations, Métis and Inuit women

by Vivian O'Donnell and Susan Wallace

Aboriginal women share many of the same challenges and concerns as other women in Canada. However, demographically, culturally and socioeconomically, Aboriginal women are also a unique population. There is also much diversity within the Aboriginal population. Broadly speaking, Aboriginal people can be considered as three distinct groups: First Nations (North American Indian), Métis and Inuit. Within each of these groups are many distinct cultural groups. This chapter will explore some of the unique characteristics of the Aboriginal female population, and examine how things have been changing over time.

Aboriginal population definition

There are various ways to define the Aboriginal population depending on the focus and the requirements of the data user. This article focuses on the Aboriginal identity population. Aboriginal identity refers to those persons who reported identifying with at least one Aboriginal group, that is, First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuit, and/or those who reported being a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian, as defined by the *Indian Act of Canada*, and/or those who reported they were members of an Indian band or First Nation. Data are presented for each of the three Aboriginal identity groups: Inuit, Métis and First Nations (North American Indian).¹⁴⁶ In some tables, data are also presented for the Status Indian population. The term 'First Nations' is used throughout the article to refer to people who identified as North American Indian and includes both Status and non-Status Indians. In this article, the Aboriginal female population is also referred to as 'Aboriginal women and girls'.

146. It was possible to report both single and multiple responses to the Aboriginal identity question. Census data used in this paper for First Nations (North American Indian), Métis and Inuit are based on the single responses only. Aboriginal Peoples Survey and Aboriginal Children's Survey data represent a combination of both the single and multiple Aboriginal identity populations. As an example, the Métis data findings include those who were identified as Métis only and those identified as Métis in combination with another Aboriginal group (for example, Métis and First Nations [North American Indian]).

A growing population

In 2006, there were 600,695 Aboriginal females in Canada. Aboriginal women and girls made up 4% of the total Canadian female population that year (Table 8.1).

Table 8.1
Aboriginal population, Canada, 2006

Aboriginal population	Females		Males		Females as a % of the Aboriginal group
	number	%	number	%	
Total — Aboriginal identity population	600,695	100.0	572,095	100.0	51.2
First Nations	359,975	59.9	338,050	59.1	51.6
Métis	196,280	32.7	193,500	33.8	50.4
Inuit	25,455	4.2	25,025	4.4	50.4
Multiple Aboriginal identities	4,055	0.7	3,685	0.6	52.4
Other	14,930	2.5	11,830	2.1	55.8

Notes: 'First Nations' refers to those who identified as 'North American Indian' (includes both Status and non-Status Indians).

'Multiple Aboriginal identities' refers to those who reported belonging to more than one Aboriginal group (First Nations, Métis and/or Inuit). 'Other' includes those who did not affiliate with an Aboriginal group but who have Registered Indian status and/or band membership.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

In 2006, 60% of the Aboriginal female population reported being First Nations (includes both Status and non-Status Indians), while 33% were Métis and 4% were Inuit. The remaining 3% either reported belonging to more than one Aboriginal group, or they did not identify with an Aboriginal group, but reported having Registered Indian status and/or band membership (Table 8.1).

Table 8.2
Aboriginal female population, by province or territory, Canada, 2006

Province/territory	Total Aboriginal population — Both sexes	Total — Aboriginal female population	First Nations women and girls number	Métis women and girls	Inuit women and girls	Other Aboriginal responses ¹	As a % of female population that is Aboriginal in each region
Canada	1,172,790	600,695	359,975	196,280	25,455	18,985	3.8
Newfoundland and Labrador	23,450	11,930	3,945	3,305	2,350	2,330	4.6
Prince Edward Island	1,730	970	660	240	20	35	1.4
Nova Scotia	24,175	12,405	7,915	3,740	185	565	2.7
New Brunswick	17,655	9,010	6,570	1,815	110	505	2.4
Quebec	108,430	54,905	33,395	13,680	5,480	2,345	1.4
Ontario	242,495	124,900	82,440	36,580	1,095	4,780	2.0
Manitoba	175,395	89,675	51,930	36,190	280	1,270	15.6
Saskatchewan	141,890	72,325	46,940	24,175	105	1,105	14.9
Alberta	188,365	96,625	50,050	43,515	815	2,240	5.9
British Columbia	196,075	101,215	66,390	30,850	460	3,515	4.9
Yukon	7,580	3,915	3,245	400	155	115	26.1
Northwest Territories	20,635	10,475	6,430	1,720	2,190	130	52.1
Nunavut	24,920	12,355	50	65	12,210	25	86.2

1. The category 'Other Aboriginal responses' includes those who reported belonging to more than one Aboriginal group (First Nations, Métis and/or Inuit) and those who did not affiliate with an Aboriginal group but who have Registered Indian status and/or band membership.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

The female Aboriginal population is growing much more rapidly than the rest of the female population in Canada. In the period from 1996 to 2006, the number of Aboriginal females rose by 45%, compared to a 9% growth rate in the non-Aboriginal female population.¹⁴⁷

Of the three groups of Aboriginal women, the Métis population increased the most from 1996 to 2006: a growth of 91% growth for Métis, 30% for First Nations, and 27% for Inuit. The growth of the Métis population is due not only to factors such as high birth rates and improved enumeration, but also because an increasing number of people are newly reporting Métis identity. (See the text box: 'Ethnic mobility' and the growth of the Métis population.)

As with the overall population, women make up the slight majority of Aboriginal people in Canada. In 2006, women made up 51% of the total Aboriginal population. That year, 52% of the total First Nations population in Canada was female, while the figure was around 50% for both the Métis and Inuit groups (Table 8.1).

147. When comparisons are made to 1996, 2006 data have been adjusted to account for the addition of some Indian reserves and settlements that were incompletely enumerated in 1996. That is, only those Indian reserves that were enumerated in both census years (2006 and 1996) were included.

'Ethnic mobility' and the growth of the Métis population

It is clear that increasing numbers of Canadians are newly reporting Aboriginal identity on the census over time. This phenomenon is captured by the term 'ethnic mobility'. The concept of ethnic mobility has been identified as a major contributor to the high growth rate of the Aboriginal population in general and the Métis population in particular.¹⁴⁸ It is difficult to identify precisely the reasons that more people are identifying as Métis over time. One factor may include increased awareness of Métis issues as a result of recent judicial decisions regarding the Aboriginal rights of the Métis (for example, the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in *R. v. Powley*, 2003).

Indian status

The *Indian Act* defines an Indian as 'a person who, pursuant to this Act, is registered as an Indian or is entitled to be registered as an Indian.' The federal government maintains an official list of Status Indians called the Indian Register. Status Indians are entitled to certain rights and benefits under the law.

In 2006, a majority of those who identified as First Nations people were registered under the *Indian Act*. In 2006, almost 292,000 First Nations females, 81% of the total, were registered, as were 81% of First Nations males. The remaining First Nations people who do not have Registered Indian status are often referred to as 'non-Status Indians'.

Because Registered Indian status is a legal concept, the number of Status Indians has been affected by changes to legislation throughout history. For example, significant growth in the Status Indian population in recent decades has been not only the result of factors such as longer life expectancy, high birth rates, and improved enumeration, but also due to legislative changes to the *Indian Act* (see text box: Bill C-31 and Bill C-3).

In 1981, the Status Indian population was 289,175. It had increased to 385,805 by 1991 and to 558,175 in 2001. In 2006, the Status Indian population had reached 623,780 (Table 8.3).¹⁴⁹

148. Guimond, É. 2003. 'Fuzzy Definitions and Population Explosions: Changing Identities of Aboriginal Groups in Canada.' *Not Strangers in These Parts: Urban Aboriginal Peoples*. D. Newhouse and E. Peters (eds.). Policy Research Initiative, p. 35-49.

149. The number of Registered Indians recorded by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's Indian Register differs from Statistics Canada's census counts of Registered Indians. These two data sources do not count Registered Indians in the same way or for the same purpose. The Indian Register is an administrative database, while the census is a statistical survey. For more information, see '2006 Census: A decade of comparable data on Aboriginal Peoples', <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/ref/info/aboriginal-autochtones-eng.cfm>.

Table 8.3**Status Indian population, by area of residence, Canada, 1981, 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006**

Area of residence	1981	1991	1996	2001	2006	Growth rate from 1981 to 2006 (%)
	number					
On reserve	170,055	184,710	227,285	274,215	299,970	76.4
Female	82,220	89,660	110,335	135,030	148,185	80.2
Male	87,835	95,055	116,950	139,185	151,785	72.8
Off reserve	119,120	201,090	260,755	283,955	323,815	171.8
Female	64,180	111,225	142,490	154,715	174,760	172.3
Male	54,940	89,870	118,265	129,245	149,050	171.3
Total — On and off reserve	289,175	385,805	488,040	558,175	623,780	115.7
Female	146,400	200,885	252,830	289,745	322,945	120.6
Male	142,770	184,920	235,210	268,430	300,835	110.7

Notes: These counts are from the Census of Population. The number of Status Indians recorded by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's Indian Register differs from Statistics Canada's census counts of Status Indians. These two data sources do not count Status Indians in the same way or for the same purpose. The Indian Register is an administrative database, while the census is a statistical survey. (For more information, see '2006 Census: A decade of comparable data on Aboriginal Peoples' at <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/ref/info/aboriginal-autochtones-eng.cfm>).

Note that growth rates may be affected by the improved enumeration of Indian reserves and settlements in the census over time.

Source: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1981, 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006.

Projections from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) indicate that the Status Indian population will continue to grow, although the rate of growth is expected to decrease over time. Decreases are expected to occur because of declining fertility and loss of registration entitlement among a growing number of descendants of Status Indians.¹⁵⁰ It is important to note that INAC's projections were released prior to the creation of Bill C-3: Gender Equity in Indian Registration Act (see text box: Bill C-31 and Bill C-3).

150. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. 2007. Aboriginal Demography: Population, Household and Family Projections, 2001-2026. (Catalogue: R3-62/2007), p. 24.

Bill C-31 and Bill C-3

The Status Indian population has undergone dramatic increases in the past couple of decades. A significant part of this growth can be attributed to legislative changes. In particular, the *Indian Act* was amended in 1985 through Bill C-31 to redress certain provisions in the *Indian Act* that discriminated against women. Prior to the 1985 amendments, Status Indian women who married non-Status men lost their Registered Indian status. As well, these women could no longer pass Registered Indian status on to their children. The opposite was true for Status Indian men. Non-status women who married Status Indian men were automatically conferred Indian status.¹⁵¹

Bill C-31 amendments allowed many women and their children to reclaim Indian status, and, in some cases, their First Nation (band) membership. Others who had voluntarily or involuntarily lost their Indian status through other provisions of the *Indian Act* could also apply to have their status restored. By the end of 2002, more than 114,000 individuals had been added to the Registered Indian population through these provisions.¹⁵²

Bill C-31 also introduced new inheritance rules regarding the passing of Registered Indian status from parents to children. Both parents must have Registered Indian status to pass Indian status on to their children. An exception occurs when at least one parent has been registered under section 6(1) of the legislation. In this case, if one parent is registered under 6(1) and the other parent is not registered, children remain eligible for registration under section 6(2). However, a parent registered under 6(2) cannot pass Registered Indian status to a child unless the other parent is also a Status Indian.

Bill C-31 provided that the children of women who had lost status through marriage to a non-Indian under the previous rules were re-instated under section 6(2). In effect, the cut-off for passing on Indian status would come a generation earlier for grandchildren of Indian women who had out-married than the grandchildren of Indian men who had out-married. A court challenge by Sharon McIvor, on the basis of equality under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, resulted in the Supreme Court of British Columbia ordering the Government of Canada to revise the *Indian Act* to include these grandchildren. The Government of Canada has created Bill C-3: Gender Equity in Indian Registration Act to make these revisions. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada estimates that as a result of this legislation approximately 45,000 persons will become newly entitled to registration.¹⁵³

151. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. 2010. *Existing Indian Act Provisions*. <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/br/is/bll/hst/exi-eng.asp> (accessed March 29, 2011).

152. Clatworthy, S. 2007. "Indian Registration, Membership, and Population Changes in First Nations Communities". *Aboriginal Policy Research Volume V: Moving Forward, Making a Difference*. J. P. White, S. Wingert, D. Beavon, and P. Maxim (eds.), p. 99-120.

153. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. 2011. History of Bill C-3, <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/br/is/bll/hst/index-eng.asp> (accessed March 29 2011).

Distribution of Aboriginal women across the country

Of the provinces, Manitoba and Saskatchewan have the largest proportion of Aboriginal females out of the overall female populations. In 2006, Aboriginal women and girls made up 16% of all females in Manitoba and 15% of all females in Saskatchewan, while the figure was 6% in Alberta, 5% in both British Columbia and Newfoundland and Labrador, and 3% or less in the remaining provinces (Table 8.2).

Aboriginal females make up much larger shares of the population living in the territories. In 2006, more than half (52%) of females in the Northwest Territories and 26% of those in the Yukon were Aboriginal women and girls. In Nunavut, 86% of women and girls were Inuit (Table 8.2).¹⁵⁴

In terms of actual numbers, however, Ontario has the largest number of Aboriginal females. In 2006, there were 124,900 Aboriginal women and girls in Ontario. That year, 21% of all Aboriginal females lived in Ontario, while 17% resided in British Columbia, 16% lived in Alberta, 15% in Manitoba, 12% in Saskatchewan, 9% in Québec, and 5% in the Atlantic Provinces. The remaining 5% of the female Aboriginal population lived in one of the territories (Table 8.2).

There is also considerable variation in the distribution of females in the different Aboriginal groups across the country. In 2006, the largest share of First Nations women and girls lived in Ontario (23%), while Alberta was home to the largest share of Métis females (22%) and almost half (48%) of Inuit women and girls lived in Nunavut.

Living in census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations

In Canada's census metropolitan areas (CMAs), the largest concentrations of Aboriginal females were found in Winnipeg, Saskatoon and, Regina.¹⁵⁵ In 2006, 10% of the total female population in Winnipeg was Aboriginal, as was 9% of that in each of Saskatoon and Regina. Aboriginal women and girls also accounted for 5% of the female population in Edmonton.

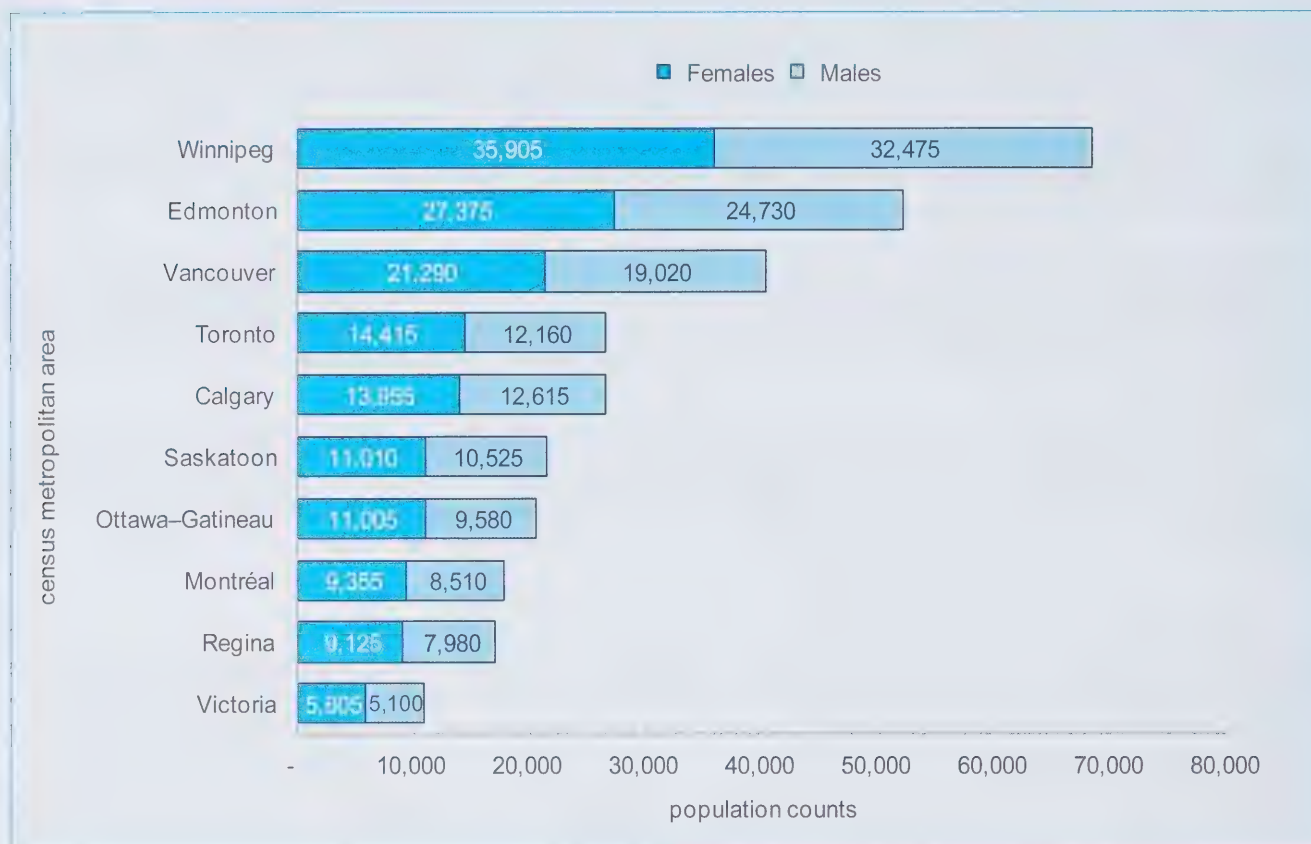
Winnipeg had the largest number of Aboriginal women and girls. In 2006, there were almost 36,000 Aboriginal females living in Winnipeg, while there were 27,375 Aboriginal females living in Edmonton, 21,290 in Vancouver, and approximately 14,000 each in Toronto and Calgary (Chart 8.1).

154. A relatively small proportion (about 1%) of women and girls in Nunavut belonged to the other Aboriginal groups (First Nations and Métis).

155. A census metropolitan area (CMA) is an area consisting of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major core area. A census metropolitan area must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the core.

Chart 8.1

Aboriginal population in selected census metropolitan areas, Canada, 2006



Note: A census metropolitan area (CMA) is an area consisting of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major core area. A census metropolitan area must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the core.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

In each of the census metropolitan areas (CMAs) listed in chart 8.1, a slight majority of Aboriginal residents were female. For example, in Toronto, 54% of Aboriginal residents were female. In Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver, Calgary, Ottawa-Gatineau, Regina and Victoria, 53% of Aboriginal residents were female. It was also the case that among non-Aboriginal residents of these CMAs, females were in the majority.

Table 8.4**Female population, by Aboriginal identity, selected census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations, Canada, 2006**

Selected census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	Total — Female population	Total — Aboriginal female population	As a % of total female population	First Nations female population	As a % of total female population	Métis female population	As a % of total female population	Non-Aboriginal female population	As a % of total female population
Census metropolitan area									
Winnipeg	351,975	35,905	10	14,350	4	20,735	6	316,070	90
Edmonton	515,525	27,375	5	11,965	2	14,380	3	488,155	95
Vancouver	1,072,920	21,290	2	12,475	1	7,835	1	1,051,635	98
Toronto	2,602,990	14,415	1	9,365	0	4,065	0	2,588,575	99
Calgary	536,530	13,955	3	5,800	1	7,705	1	522,575	97
Saskatoon	118,480	11,010	9	6,125	5	4,665	4	107,465	91
Ottawa–Gatineau	573,420	11,005	2	5,885	1	4,135	1	562,415	98
Montréal	1,843,990	9,355	1	5,365	0	3,025	0	1,834,640	99
Regina	99,395	9,125	9	5,260	5	3,625	4	90,270	91
Victoria	169,645	5,805	3	3,535	2	1,975	1	163,840	97
Census agglomeration									
Prince Albert	20,865	7,130	34	3,605	17	3,445	17	13,735	66
Prince George	41,175	4,520	11	2,280	6	2,045	5	36,655	89
Sault Ste. Marie	40,815	4,100	10	2,515	6	1,515	4	36,720	90
Kamloops	46,860	3,800	8	2,270	5	1,415	3	43,055	92
Grande Prairie	34,620	3,250	9	1,380	4	1,785	5	31,370	91
Wood Buffalo	24,385	3,105	13	1,620	7	1,250	5	21,280	87
Chilliwack	40,925	2,940	7	2,025	5	800	2	37,980	93
Nanaimo	46,845	2,810	6	1,775	4	895	2	44,035	94
Thompson	6,600	2,645	40	1,760	27	810	12	3,955	60
Prince Rupert	6,660	2,605	39	2,380	36	95	1	4,055	61

Note: A census metropolitan area (CMA) is an area consisting of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major core area. A census metropolitan area must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the core.

A census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centered on a large core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

In 2006, the census agglomerations (CAs) with the largest female Aboriginal populations were Prince Albert (7,130), Prince George (4,520) and Sault Ste Marie (4,100) (Table 8.4).¹⁵⁶ The Aboriginal women and girls make up between 34% and 40% of the female population of Thompson, Prince Rupert and Prince Albert. As of a percentage of total female population, Aboriginal women and girls often make up a larger proportion of the female populations in CAs as compared to CMAs.

There are small numbers of Inuit women and girls in many CMAs and CAs. The CMA with the largest female Inuit population was Ottawa–Gatineau, with a population of 410 women and girls, while Yellowknife and Whitehorse were the CAs with the largest Inuit population (405 and 135 women and girls, respectively). The Inuit population makes up small proportions of most CMAs and CAs. For example, Inuit women formed 0.1% of the population of Ottawa–Gatineau. It was only in Yellowknife and Whitehorse where Inuit women and girls formed more than 1% of the female population (data not shown).

Living in rural areas

In 2006, Métis women were the most likely of the three Aboriginal groups to live in rural areas.¹⁵⁷ That year, 28% of Métis females and 12% of First Nations women lived in rural areas (not including reserves). That same year, 5% of Inuit women lived in rural areas (outside of Inuit Nunangat) and 18% of non-Aboriginal women lived in rural areas.

156. A census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centered on a large core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000.

157. For a definition of 'rural' please see <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/subjects-sujets/standard-norme/sgc-cgt/urban-urbain-eng.htm> (accessed May 27, 2011).

Living on reserve

Generally speaking, only Status Indians are eligible to reside on reserve. In 2006, less than half (46%) of Status Indian females were living on reserve, making Status Indian women slightly less likely than their male counterparts to live on a reserve. That year, 50% of Status Indian males resided on a reserve (Table 8.5).

In 2006, there were a total of 169,480 women and girls living on a reserve (Status and non-Status included), representing less than half (49%) of the on-reserve population.

Table 8.5

Area of residence of the First Nations population, Status Indian population and non-Status Indian population, by sex, Canada, 2006

Area of residence	First Nations population		Status Indian population		Non-Status Indian population		Non-Aboriginal population	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
Total population	698,025	100.0	623,780	100.0	133,155	100.0	30,068,240	100.0
On reserve	300,755	43.1	299,965	48.1	4,645	3.5	34,375	0.1
Off reserve	397,265	56.9	323,815	51.9	128,510	96.5	30,033,865	99.9
Females	359,970	100.0	322,945	100.0	68,300	100.0	15,314,070	100.0
On reserve	148,255	41.2	148,185	45.9	2,200	3.2	17,270	0.1
Off reserve	211,715	58.8	174,760	54.1	66,100	96.8	15,296,800	99.9
Males	338,050	100.0	300,835	100.0	64,860	100.0	14,754,175	100.0
On reserve	152,500	45.1	151,785	50.5	2,445	3.8	17,110	0.1
Off reserve	185,550	54.9	149,050	49.5	62,415	96.2	14,737,065	99.9

Notes: The category 'Total First Nations' includes those who identified as North American Indian (includes both Status and non-Status Indians). 'Status Indians' includes those with Registered Indian status even if they did not identify as First Nations (North American Indian). 'Non-status Indians' includes all women and children who identified as First Nations (North American Indian) but who did not have Registered Indian status. The numbers given for the Status Indian population in Table 8.5 may not match the counts given in Table 8.3 due to rounding procedures.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Living in Inuit Nunangat

The 2006 Census enumerated 50,485 Inuit living in Canada; over three-quarters (78%) lived in the area known as Inuit Nunangat. Inuit Nunangat is comprised of four regions created through the signing of land claims agreements and from west to east includes the Inuvialuit region in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik north of the 55th parallel in Quebec and Nunatsiavut in northern Labrador (Table 8.6).

Table 8.6
Area of residence of Inuit, Canada, 2006

Area of residence	Total population		Female		Male	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
Total Inuit	50,485	100.0	25,455	100.0	25,025	100.0
Inuit Nunangat (Inuit regions)	39,480	78.2	19,540	76.8	19,940	79.7
Nunatsiavut	2,155	4.3	1,050	4.1	1,110	4.4
Nunavik	9,570	19.0	4,725	18.6	4,845	19.4
Nunavut	24,635	48.8	12,215	48.0	12,425	49.7
Inuvialuit region	3,120	6.2	1,555	6.1	1,565	6.3
Outside of Inuit Nunangat	11,005	21.8	5,920	23.3	5,085	20.3

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Overall there were 19,540 Inuit women and girls living in Inuit Nunangat in 2006. The proportion of Inuit females living within Inuit Nunangat decreased from 82% in 1996 to 77% in 2006.

The region with the largest Inuit female population was the territory of Nunavut, home to 12,215 Inuit females (Table 8.6).

A relatively young population

The Aboriginal population is much younger than the non-Aboriginal population. In 2006, the median age of Aboriginal females was 27.7 years, compared with 40.5 years for non-Aboriginal females, a gap of almost 13 years. (The median age is the point where exactly one-half of the population is older, and the other half is younger.)

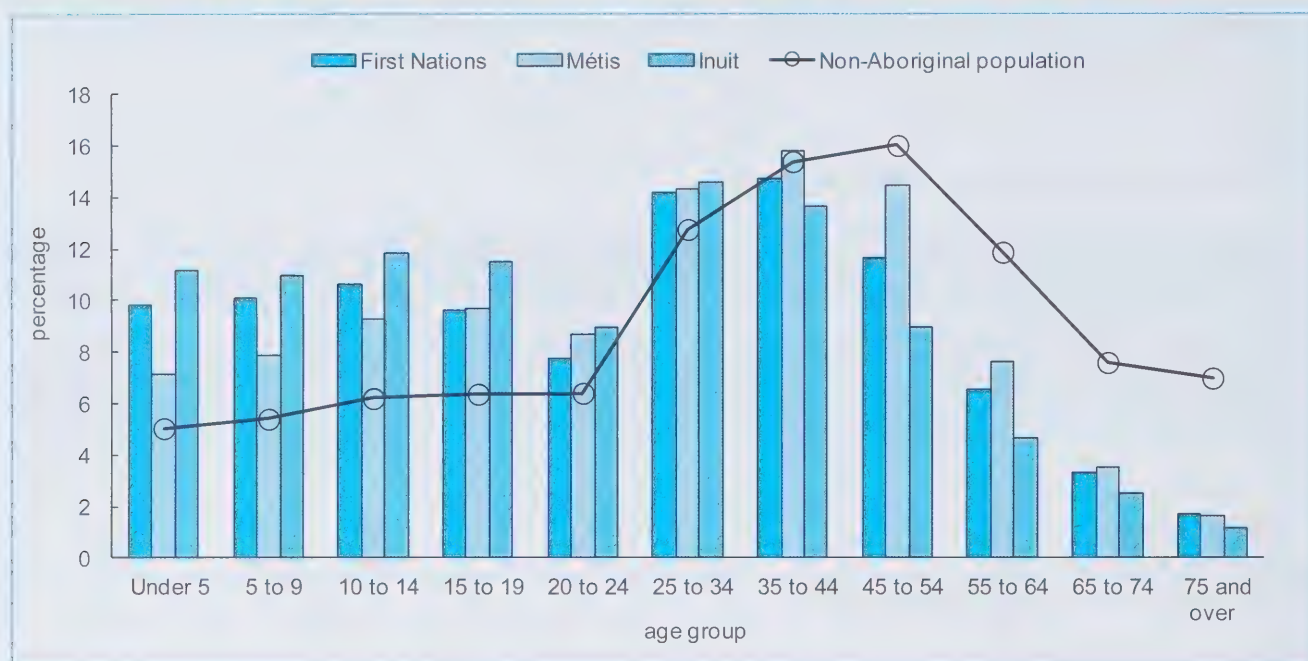
Of the three Aboriginal groups, Inuit are the youngest. The median age of Inuit women and girls was 22.3 years, compared to 26.4 years for First Nations females, and 29.9 years for Métis females.

In 2006, almost half (46%) of Aboriginal females were children and youth; 28% of the female Aboriginal population were under 15 years of age, and 18% were aged 15 to 24.

Among the Inuit female population, about one-third (34%) were under the age of 15, while the figure was 31% among First Nations females and 24% among the Métis female population (Chart 8.2). (For more information, see the text box entitled 'Aboriginal girls and teens'.)

Chart 8.2

Age structure of the female population, by Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Senior Aboriginal women

The Aboriginal population continues to be a relatively young population, compared to the non-Aboriginal population. In 2006, 5% of Aboriginal women were aged 65 and over, compared with 15% of non-Aboriginal women. However, the number of Aboriginal senior women, while relatively small, doubled between 1996 and 2006, while the number of senior women in the non-Aboriginal population increased 20%.

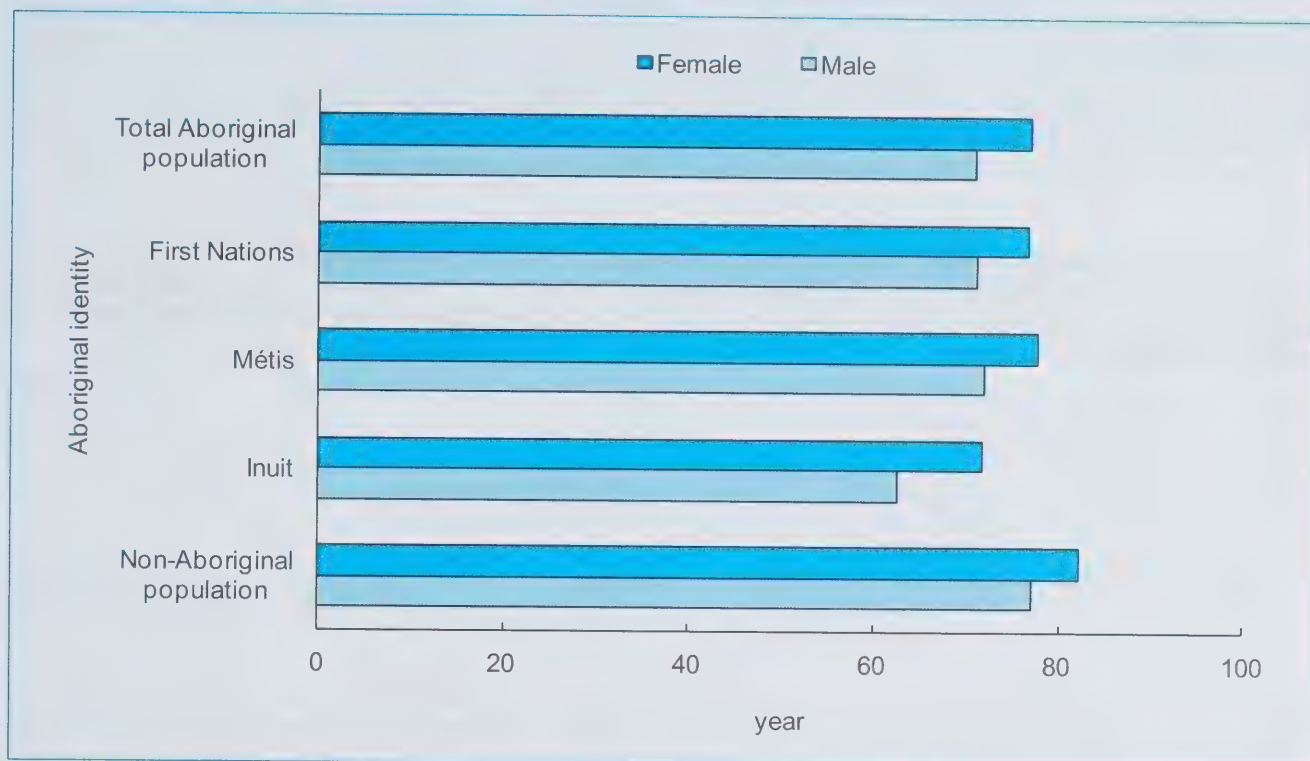
As with the non-Aboriginal population, women account for the majority of Aboriginal seniors. In 2006, 55% of all Aboriginal people aged 65 and over were female. In particular, women made up 56% of First Nations seniors, and 51% of Métis and Inuit aged 65 and over.

Life expectancy

While life expectancy has been improving, a gap between the life expectancy of Aboriginal women and non-Aboriginal women persists. In 2001, the estimated life expectancy at birth for Aboriginal females was 76.8 years, over five years less than their non-Aboriginal counterparts who could expect to live, on average, just over 82 years (Chart 8.3).¹⁵⁸

Chart 8.3

Life expectancy at birth, by Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.

158. O'Donnell, V. 2005. 'Aboriginal Women in Canada.' *Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report*. (Component of Statistics Canada catalogue no. 89-503-X).

In 2001, Métis women had a life expectancy of 77.7 years, while the figure for First Nations women was 76.7 years. Inuit women had a shorter life expectancy of 71.7 years. In all three Aboriginal groups, though, women had longer life expectancies than men.

In 2001, Aboriginal females had a life expectancy at birth of 76.8 years, compared with 70.9 years for Aboriginal males.¹⁵⁹

Other recently-released research had similar findings. It concluded that this gap has widened in recent decades.¹⁶⁰ In 1991, life expectancy at birth for women in the Inuit-inhabited areas was about 69.6 years, which was about 11 years lower than for Canadian women overall (80.9 years). In 2001, life expectancy for women in Inuit-inhabited areas did not increase (69.8 years), although it rose by about 1 year for Canadian women as a whole (82.0).

A different study found that at age 25, a Métis woman could expect to live an additional 53.7 years, about 4.2 years longer than Métis men and 5.5 years less than non-Aboriginal women.¹⁶¹ Life expectancy at age 25 was estimated to be about 52.9 additional years for Status Indian women, about 6 years shorter than non-Aboriginal women.

This study also examined whether socioeconomic indicators, such as income, education and occupation could explain the excess mortality for Métis and Status Indians. It found that differences in socioeconomic indicators could explain roughly two-thirds of the excess mortality for Métis and Status Indian men, and nearly 30% for Métis and Status Indian women.

159. Ibid.

160. Wilkins, R., S. Uppal, P. Finès, S. Senécal, É. Guimond and R. Dion. March 2008. 'Life expectancy in the Inuit-inhabited areas of Canada, 1989 to 2003.' *Health Reports* Volume 19, no. 1. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 82-003-X): p.7-20.

161. Tjepkema, M., R. Wilkins, S. Senécal, É. Guimond, and C. Penney. 'December 2009. Mortality of Métis and Registered Indian adults in Canada: An 11-year follow-up study.' *Health Reports* Volume 20, no. 4. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 82-003-X).

Aboriginal women and their families

A large proportion of Aboriginal women in Canada live with either their immediate or extended family. In 2006, 86% of Aboriginal women aged 15 and over lived with family members, compared with 83% of non-Aboriginal women (Table 8.7).

Table 8.7

Family status of women aged 15 and over, by Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2006

Census family status	Total Aboriginal population	First Nations	Métis percentage	Inuit	Total non- Aboriginal population
Total — Living with family	86.3	87.3	84.5	92.4	82.5
With husband or wife	30.3	27.2	35.4	28.4	47.1
With common-law partner	17.5	18.8	15.0	22.1	10.2
Lone parent	18.0	20.3	14.2	17.4	8.3
Child living with parents	16.8	16.6	17.1	20.5	14.2
Living with extended family members	3.8	4.4	2.8	4.0	2.7
Total — Not living with family	13.7	12.7	15.5	7.6	17.5
Living alone	9.7	9.1	10.9	5.2	14.2
Living with non-relatives	4.0	3.7	4.7	2.4	3.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
			number		
Total population	428,950	249,215	148,025	16,745	12,687,795

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Among Aboriginal women, Inuit are the most likely to live with family members. In 2006, 92% of Inuit women lived with either their immediate or extended families, while the figures were 87% for First Nations women and 84% for Métis women.

Aboriginal women were less likely than non-Aboriginal women to be legally married. In 2006, 30% of Aboriginal women aged 15 and over, versus 47% of non-Aboriginal women, lived with a spouse. In contrast, a larger proportion of Aboriginal women were living in a common-law relationship compared to non-Aboriginal women, 17% versus 10%. Common-law status refers to persons who live together as a couple but who are not legally married to each other.

Married and common-law couples include those of the opposite sex or of the same sex. The 2006 Census enumerated about 1,350 Aboriginal women in same-sex couples; about 15% of Aboriginal women in same-sex couples were married, while the remainder were living in a common-law relationship.

Relatively few Aboriginal women were living alone. In 2006, just 10% of Aboriginal women lived alone, compared with 14% of non-Aboriginal women. Among Aboriginal women, Métis women were the most likely to live alone. That year, 11% of Métis women, versus 9% of First Nations women and 5% of Inuit women, lived by themselves. It should be noted that nearly half of non-Aboriginal women who lived alone were 65 years and over, compared to 23% of Aboriginal women (Table 8.7).

Lone parents

Aboriginal women were more likely to be lone parents than non-Aboriginal women. In 2006, 18% of Aboriginal women aged 15 and over were heading families on their own, compared with 8% of non-Aboriginal women (Table 8.7).

In 2006, 20% of First Nations women over the age of 15 were lone parents, while this was the case for 17% of Inuit women and 14% of Métis women.

Lone-parent families headed by Aboriginal women tend to be larger than those headed by their non-Aboriginal counterparts. In 2006, 22% of Aboriginal female lone parents had three or more children, more than twice the figure for their non-Aboriginal counterparts at 10%. About one in four First Nations (25%) and Inuit (23%) female lone parents had three or more children, while 16% of Métis female lone parents had three or more children.

Fertility rates

Fertility rates remain higher for Aboriginal women compared to non-Aboriginal women. In the 1996 to 2001 period, the fertility rate of Aboriginal women was 2.6 children, that is, they could expect to have that many children, on average, over the course of their lifetime; this compared with a figure of 1.5 among all Canadian women.¹⁶² In the same period, the fertility rate for Inuit women was estimated to be 3.4 children, compared with rates of 2.9 children for First Nations women and 2.2 for Métis women.¹⁶³

Teen parents

Census data reveal that in 2006, 8% of Aboriginal teenage girls (15 to 19 years old) were parents, compared to 1.3% of their non-Aboriginal counterparts. Almost one in ten (9%) of First Nations and Inuit teenage girls were parents; this proportion was higher for First Nations teenage girls living on reserve (12%). About 4% of Métis teenage girls were parents in 2006.

A recent study has found that the fertility rate of Status Indian teenagers aged 15 to 19, from 1986 to 2004, is six times higher than that of other Canadian teens.¹⁶⁴ In Manitoba, the fertility rate during the 2000 to 2004 period for teenage Status Indian women was 125 births per 1,000 women, the highest of all the provinces.¹⁶⁵ As for the consequences of being a teen parent, the study notes that, 'generally speaking, early motherhood increases the vulnerability of a young First Nations woman who is already disadvantaged socio-economically by reason of her cultural background and gender.'¹⁶⁶

162. O'Donnell, V. 2005. 'Aboriginal Women in Canada.' *Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report*. (Component of Statistics Canada catalogue no. 89-503-X).

163. Statistics Canada. June 2005. *Projections of the Aboriginal populations, Canada, provinces and territories: 2001 to 2017*. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 91-547-XIE).

164. Big Eagle, C. and É. Guimond. 2009. 'Contributions that Count: First Nations Women and Demography.' *Restoring Balance: First Nations Women, Community, and Culture*. G. Guthrie Valaskakis, M. Dion Stout, and É. Guimond (eds.).

165. Ibid.

166. Guimond, É. and N. Robitaille. March 2008. 'When Teenage Girls Have Children: Trends and Consequences'. *Horizons Policy Research Initiative*. Volume 10, no. 1.

Recent research findings about Aboriginal girls and teens

Many young Aboriginal children growing up in large families with young parents

According to the 2006 Census, there were approximately 7,000 Inuit, 35,000 Métis and 86,000 First Nations children under the age of 6 years across Canada. Roughly half (49%) of these children were girls.

Compared to non-Aboriginal children, higher percentages of these young Aboriginal children are growing up in large families. Of those under the age of 6, 28% of Inuit girls, 25% of First Nations girls, and 11% of Métis girls were living in families with four or more children. This is compared to 8% of non-Aboriginal girls under the age of 6 in Canada.

About one in four Inuit (24%) and First Nations (26%) girls, and one in five (21%) Métis girls had mothers between the ages of 15 to 24; this is compared to 8% of non-Aboriginal girls.

Many persons involved in raising young Aboriginal children

While many young Aboriginal children are being raised by lone parents (36% versus 13% of their non-Aboriginal counterparts), the Aboriginal Children's Survey found that other people, including extended family and community members, are involved in raising them.

In 2006, among children under the age of 6 years, 67% of First Nations children living off reserve, 69% of Métis children, and 71% of Inuit children received focused attention from their grandparents at least once a week. Furthermore, 26% of First Nations children, 24% of Métis children, and 35% of Inuit children received focused attention from Elders at least once a week.¹⁶⁷

Guèvremont (2010) reported that while Inuit and Métis children living with two parents were more likely to have four or more people raising them, this was not the case for First Nations children living off-reserve.¹⁶⁸ The percentage of off-reserve First Nations children with four or more people raising them was not different for children living with a lone parent compared to children living with two parents.

167. O'Donnell, V. November 2008. 'Selected findings of the Aboriginal Children's Survey 2006: Family and Community', *Canadian Social Trends*, no. 86 (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 11-008-XWE).

168. Guèvremont, A. June 2010. *The Early Learning Experiences of Inuit, Métis and Off-reserve First Nations Children in Canada*. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 89-644-XWE).

Crowded housing

Household crowding has been linked to a number of health and social issues, including increased rates of respiratory infections, mental health problems and family violence.¹⁶⁹ Crowded dwellings are defined as having more than 1 person per room. Not counted as rooms are bathrooms, halls, vestibules and rooms used solely for business purposes.

In 2006, 31% of Inuit women and girls were living in crowded homes, compared to 3% of non-Aboriginal females. The percentage of Inuit females living in crowded homes had declined from 36% in 1996.

Crowding was of particular concern in Inuit Nunangat, where 39% of Inuit women and girls were living in crowded conditions. In the Inuit region of Nunavik in northern Quebec, half of Inuit females were living in crowded conditions, as were 39% in Nunavut, 19% in the Inuvialuit region in Northwest Territories and 11% in Nunatsiavut in Labrador (Table 8.8).

Table 8.8
Proportion of Inuit females living in crowded dwellings and in homes requiring major repairs, by Inuit region, Canada, 2006

Inuit females	In crowded dwellings		In homes requiring major repairs	
	number	%	number	%
Total Inuit females	7,790	30.7	6,995	27.6
Inuit Nunangat (Inuit regions)	7,530	38.6	6,155	31.5
Nunatsiavut	120	11.4	355	33.8
Nunavik	2,355	49.8	2,195	46.5
Nunavut	4,750	39.0	3,165	26.0
Inuvialuit region	300	19.4	440	28.4
Outside of Inuit Nunangat	265	4.5	840	14.3

Notes: Crowded dwellings are defined as having more than 1 person per room. Not counted as rooms are bathrooms, halls, vestibules and rooms used solely for business purposes. The two categories 'In crowded dwellings' and 'In homes requiring major repairs' were calculated independently of each other. No figures are cited in this table for both crowding and need for major repairs. Homes in need of major repairs refers to whether, in the judgement of the respondent, the dwelling requires major repairs. Major repairs refer to the repair of defective plumbing or electrical wiring, structural repairs to walls, floors or ceilings, etc. (excluding desirable remodelling or additions).

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

While sufficient housing is important in every part of Canada, research indicates that Inuit, in particular, face a number of housing challenges. "As most communities have no homeless shelters and as extreme winter temperatures make living outside dangerous, some Inuit are taken into the homes of family and friends that may already be crowded."¹⁷⁰

169. Health Canada. 1999. *A Second Diagnostic on the Health of First Nations and Inuit People in Canada*. Health Canada, Ottawa, p. 14.

170. Tait, H. December 2008. *Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2006: Inuit Health and Social Conditions*. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 89-637-X – No. 001).

In 2006, 14% of First Nations women and girls were living in crowded dwellings, over three times higher than the proportion of non-Aboriginal females (3%). In reserve communities, 26% of First Nations women and girls were living in crowded conditions; among First Nations females living off reserve, 6% were living in crowded conditions. Overall, the proportion of First Nations females living in crowded conditions declined approximately 5 percentage points since 1996.¹⁷¹

Overall, about the same percentage of Métis women and girls were living in crowded conditions as non-Aboriginal women and girls (3%).

Half of Nunavut homes overcrowded

The 2009/2010 Nunavut Housing Needs Survey found that 49% of occupied dwellings in Nunavut were crowded¹⁷² and/or in need of major repairs. In crowded dwellings, the median household size was six. About half (53%) of respondents in crowded dwellings reported that the living room was used for sleeping. The survey also found that about 1,220 residents of Nunavut (about 4% of the population) did not have a usual home and were living temporarily in another person's dwelling.¹⁷³

Housing adequacy

One way to measure housing adequacy is to ask respondents if their dwelling requires major repairs (for example the repair of defective plumbing or electrical wiring, structural repairs to walls, floors or ceilings).

In 2006, 28% of Inuit women and girls were living in homes requiring major repairs; the proportion was higher in Inuit Nunangat (32%). This is compared to 7% of non-Aboriginal women and girls in Canada overall (Table 8.8).

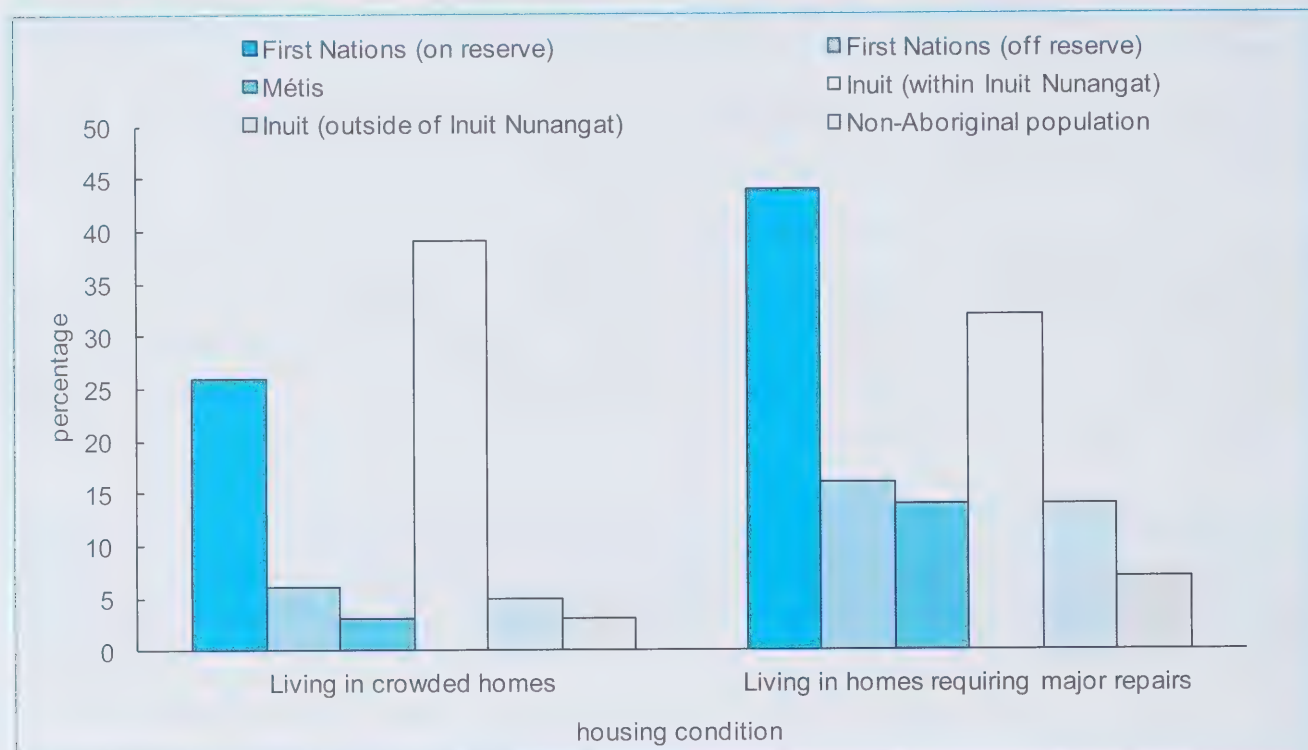
In 2006, 28% of First Nations women and girls were living in dwellings that were in need of major repairs, compared with 7% of non-Aboriginal women and girls. Among First Nations females living off reserve, 16% were living in dwellings in need of major repairs. The need for major repairs is most pronounced in reserve communities where 44% of women and girls were living in homes that needed major repairs.

In 2006, 14% of Métis women and girls were living in dwellings that required major repairs, twice the percentage of non-Aboriginal females (7%) (Chart 8.4).

171. When comparisons are made to 1996, 2006 data have been adjusted to account for the addition of some Indian reserves and settlements that were incompletely enumerated in 1996. That is, only those Indian reserves that were enumerated in both census years (2006 and 1996) were included.

172. The Nunavut Housing Needs Survey used the National Occupation Standard (NOS) to determine levels of crowding; the NOS determines the number of bedrooms needed, taking into consideration the relationships of persons in the household, and compares bedrooms needed to the actual number of bedrooms in a dwelling.

173. Statistics Canada. October 2010. 'An analysis of the housing needs in Nunavut: Nunavut Housing Needs Survey 2009/2010'. A working paper prepared by Income Statistics Division, Statistics Canada for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Chart 8.4**Housing conditions of women and girls, by Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2006**

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Aboriginal languages

English or French is the mother tongue—the language first learned at home in childhood and still understood—for the majority of Aboriginal females. In 2006, 73% of all Aboriginal females and girls reported that English was their mother tongue, while another 8% said French was their mother tongue. At the same time, though, the mother tongue of 19% of the female Aboriginal population was an Aboriginal language.

There were significant differences in the percentages of those with an Aboriginal mother tongue when looking at specific groups. In 2006, 65% of Inuit women and girls reported an Aboriginal mother tongue, compared to 25% of First Nations females and 3% of Métis females.

The proportion of Aboriginal women and girls who are able to speak an Aboriginal language is somewhat larger than the share whose mother tongue is an Aboriginal language. In 2006, 22% of Aboriginal females said they could converse in an Aboriginal language, whereas 19% reported one of these languages as their mother tongue (the language they first learned in childhood and still understand). This indicates that some Aboriginal women and girls may be learning Aboriginal languages as a second language.

This trend is also evident in each of the Aboriginal groups. While 25% of First Nations women and girls reported having an Aboriginal mother tongue, 29% reported knowledge of, or the ability to converse in, an Aboriginal language. For Inuit, these figures were 65% and 70%. For Métis, they were 3% and 4%.

Findings from the 2006 Aboriginal Peoples Survey indicated that Aboriginal languages are important to Aboriginal women. In fact, 59% of Aboriginal women 15 years and over reported that learning, relearning or maintaining their Aboriginal language was very or somewhat important. Among Inuit women, 86% reported that keeping, learning or re-learning an Aboriginal language was very or somewhat important, as did 67% of First Nations women living off reserve, and 50% of Métis women.

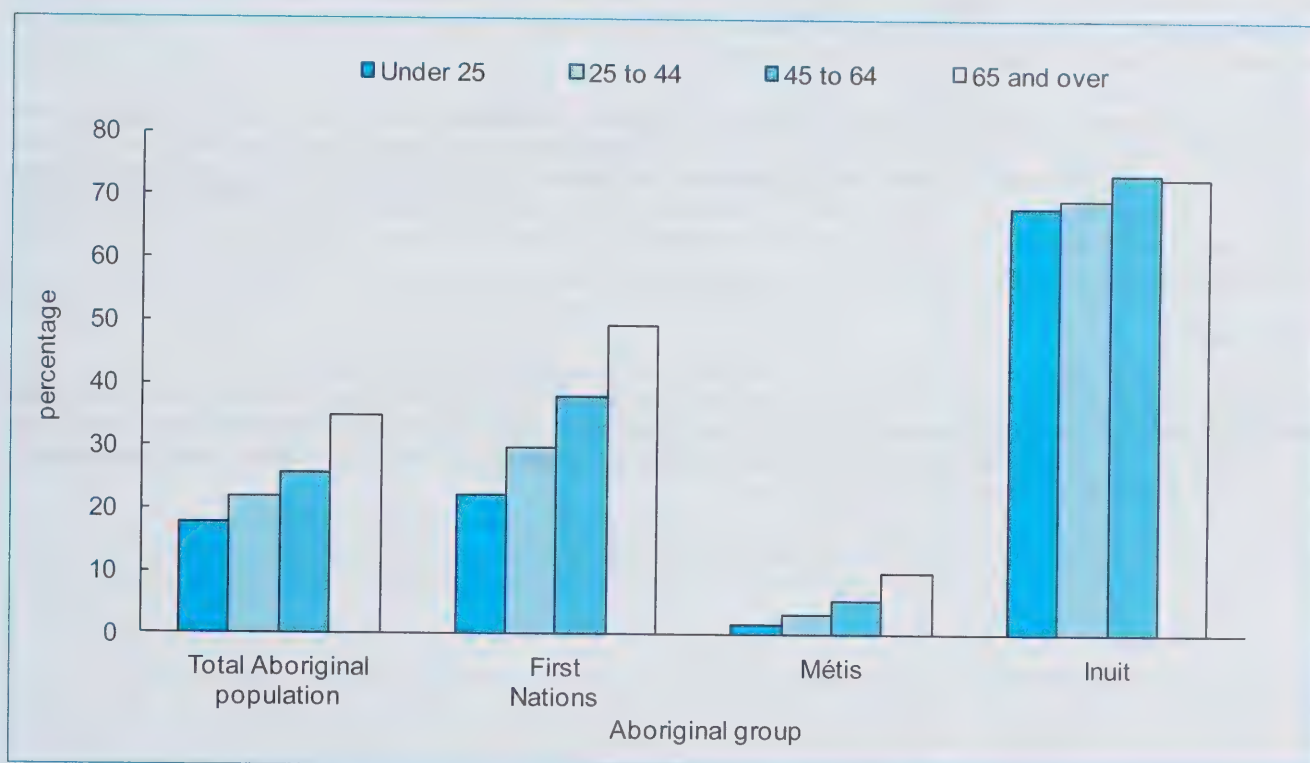
Older women more likely to speak an Aboriginal language

Older women were more likely than their younger counterparts to be able to speak an Aboriginal language. In 2006, 35% of Aboriginal women aged 65 and over reported they could speak an Aboriginal language, compared to 18% of those under the age of 25 years.

This pattern was also observed when looking at each Aboriginal group separately; half (50%) of First Nations women 65 years and over could speak an Aboriginal language compared to 22% of those under the age of 25. One in ten (10%) senior Métis women could speak an Aboriginal language compared to 2% of those under the age of 25. The difference was less striking for Inuit—while 74% of Inuit women 65 years and over could speak an Aboriginal language, 68% of those under the age of 25 years reported knowledge of an Aboriginal language (Chart 8.5).

Chart 8.5

Aboriginal women and girls by knowledge of Aboriginal language, by group and age, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Higher proportions speak Aboriginal languages on reserve and in the North

There are also differences in the ability to speak an Aboriginal language depending on where women live. In 2006, approximately half (51%) of First Nations women living on reserve reported that they were able to speak an Aboriginal language, as compared to 12% of First Nations women living off reserve.

For Inuit women, 84% had knowledge of the Inuit language¹⁷⁴ in Inuit Nunangat, compared to 18% of those living outside of Inuit Nunangat. In Nunavik, 99% could speak the Inuit language, compared to 91% in Nunavut, 28% in Nunatsiavut and 22% in the Inuvialuit region.

Among Métis women, 4% had knowledge of an Aboriginal language. This proportion was slightly higher for those living in rural areas with 6%.

Factors in Aboriginal language retention

A recent study of young First Nations children living off reserve (those under 6 years old) revealed that the strongest predictor that a child will be able to speak an Aboriginal language is daily exposure to Aboriginal languages at home, holding all other characteristics constant.¹⁷⁵ The odds of understanding an Aboriginal language for young off-reserve First Nations children who were exposed to an Aboriginal language on a daily basis at home were 6.6 times the odds for children who were not.

This research finding was consistent with previous work, which found that the decline in Aboriginal mother tongue transmission from parents to children is informed first and foremost by home use.¹⁷⁶ 'The ever-diminishing use of Aboriginal languages as 'major home languages' reduces the chances of younger people acquiring their traditional language as a mother tongue.'¹⁷⁷

The previous research also found that the Aboriginal mother tongue transmission from parents to children was linked to the life cycle; most notably for women. Using a cohort analysis of census data, the study showed that 'the most pronounced decline in home use of Aboriginal languages occurred among female youth from the ages of 20 to 24 in 1981 to ages 35 to 39 in 1996.'¹⁷⁸ The study notes that this is significant given that it is this period (from age 20 to 39 years) in the life cycle when women tend to leave the home, enter the labour force, marry, and bring up young children.

Paid work

Aboriginal women are generally less likely than their non-Aboriginal counterparts to be part of the paid work force. According to the 2006 Census, 51.1% of Aboriginal women aged 15 and over were employed, compared with 57.7% of non-Aboriginal women. Aboriginal women were also less likely than their male counterparts, 51.1% versus 56.5%, to be employed (Table 8.9).

174. There are five main Inuit language dialects spoken throughout Canada: Inuvialuktun, Inuinnaqtun, and three different dialects of Inuktitut. In this article, these dialects are collectively known as the Inuit language.

175. Bougie, E. September 2010. 'Family, community, and Aboriginal language among young First Nations children living off reserve in Canada.' *Canadian Social Trends*. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 11-008-X).

176. Norris, M. March 2008. 'Voices of Aboriginal Youth Today: Keeping Aboriginal Languages Alive for Future Generations'. *Horizons Policy Research Initiative*. Volume 10, no. 1, p. 60-67.

177. Ibid: p. 60.

178. Ibid: p. 61.

Table 8.9**Labour force indicators and median income, population aged 15 years and over, by Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2006**

Labour force indicator and median income	Total Aboriginal population	First Nations	Métis percentage	Inuit	Status Indians	Non-Aboriginal population
Participation rate —						
Total population	63.0	58.8	70.1	61.3	57.8	66.9
Females	59.1	55.0	66.2	58.9	53.9	61.7
Males	67.3	63.2	74.1	63.9	62.2	72.5
Employment rate —						
Total population	53.7	48.2	63.1	48.9	46.8	62.7
Females	51.1	46.1	60.0	49.1	44.8	57.7
Males	56.5	50.7	66.3	48.6	49.2	68.0
Unemployment rate —						
Total population	14.8	18.0	10.0	20.3	19.0	6.3
Females	13.5	16.2	9.5	16.7	17.0	6.4
Males	16.1	19.8	10.5	23.8	21.0	6.2
Median income —			dollars			
Total population	16,752	14,477	20,935	16,969	14,095	25,955
Females	15,654	14,490	17,520	16,599	14,337	20,640
Males	18,714	14,458	26,464	17,425	13,802	32,639

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

In 2006, 60.0% of Métis women were employed, slightly higher than the figure for the non-Aboriginal female population. About half (49.1%) of Inuit women, and 46.1% of First Nations women, were employed (Table 8.9).

As with the overall population, Aboriginal women aged 25 to 54 are more likely to be employed than both their younger and older counterparts. In 2006, 62.4% of Aboriginal women between 25 and 54 years were employed, as compared to 40.0% of women aged 15 to 24 years and 28.5% of women 55 years and over. This same pattern can be observed among Métis, Inuit and First Nations women (data not shown).

In each age group, Aboriginal women were less likely to be employed than non-Aboriginal women. The gap between the employment rates of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women was particularly wide in the 15 to 24 age group in which 40.0% of Aboriginal women, versus 58.4% of non-Aboriginal women, were employed (data not shown).

Among those in the core working age group (25 to 54 years) in each of the three Aboriginal groups, women were less likely to be employed than men. In 2006, 61.5% of First Nations women living off-reserve were employed compared to 72.4% of their male counterparts. Similarly, 70.4% of Métis women were employed compared to 79.2% of Métis men. However, the gap in employment rates between men and women among First Nations people living on reserve and Inuit were less pronounced; 61.0% of Inuit women were employed, compared to 61.2% of Inuit men. Among First Nations people living on reserve, the employment rates of women (51.6%) and men (51.9%) were similar (data not shown).

Sales and service most common occupation

Generally speaking, Canadian women in the labour force continue to be concentrated in occupations traditionally held by women.¹⁷⁹ In 2006, 37% of all Aboriginal women employed between January 1, 2005 and May 16, 2006 reported working in sales or service, and 23% reported administrative jobs. Aboriginal women were more than twice as likely to report working in these occupations as Aboriginal men, only 27% of whom reported employment in these sectors. The proportion of Aboriginal women who worked in these sectors (60%) was slightly higher than the proportion of non-Aboriginal women (56%). The high proportion of women reporting employment in sales and service or administrative occupations was observed across all Aboriginal groups (58% of First Nations women, 61% of Métis women and 60% of Inuit women) (Table 8.10).

Higher proportions of First Nations women living on reserve and Inuit women reported employment in 'social science, education, government service and religious occupations' compared to non-Aboriginal women. In 2006, 21% of Inuit women and 24% of First Nations women living on reserve reported employment in these occupations, compared to 12% of their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

Aboriginal women were also about as likely as both their non-Aboriginal counterparts and Aboriginal men to be employed in management occupations. In 2006, 6% of Aboriginal women reported having managerial positions, whereas the figure was 7% for Aboriginal men and 8% for non-Aboriginal women. The proportion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit women reporting management occupations was the same for each group (6%).

179. Ferrao, V. December 2010. 'Paid Work.' *Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report*. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 89-503-X).

Table 8.10**Occupational distribution of experienced labour force aged 15 years and over, by Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2006**

Occupation	percentage				
	Total Aboriginal population	First Nations	Métis	Inuit	Non-Aboriginal population
All occupations — Total population	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Management	6.4	6.4	6.5	6.3	9.8
Business, finance and administrative	14.5	13.7	15.4	15.0	18.0
Natural and applied sciences	3.3	2.9	3.9	3.0	6.7
Health	4.0	3.5	4.8	2.1	5.7
Social science, education, government service and religion	9.6	11.2	7.3	13.1	8.4
Art, culture, recreation and sport	2.2	2.3	1.9	4.9	3.0
Sales and service	28.5	28.9	27.8	31.7	23.8
Trades, transport and equipment operators	20.1	19.3	21.3	19.1	15.0
Occupations unique to primary industry	6.1	6.6	5.8	2.9	3.8
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	5.2	5.2	5.3	1.9	5.9
All occupations — Females	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Management	6.0	6.1	5.9	5.6	7.6
Business, finance and administrative	23.0	21.7	24.6	23.4	27.2
Natural and applied sciences	1.7	1.6	2.0	1.4	3.1
Health	7.0	6.1	8.5	3.5	9.6
Social science, education, government service and religion	14.7	16.9	11.3	20.7	12.0
Art, culture, recreation and sport	2.4	2.3	2.2	5.2	3.5
Sales and service	36.5	36.3	36.8	36.5	28.9
Trades, transport and equipment operators	3.6	3.7	3.6	2.1	2.2
Occupations unique to primary industry	2.0	2.1	2.1	0.4	1.8
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	3.1	3.2	3.0	1.4	4.2
All occupations — Males	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Management	6.8	6.6	7.0	7.0	11.8
Business, finance and administrative	6.3	5.9	6.7	6.8	9.8
Natural and applied sciences	4.8	4.1	5.6	4.6	9.9
Health	1.2	1.0	1.4	0.8	2.2
Social science, education, government service and religion	4.8	5.6	3.7	5.7	5.1
Art, culture, recreation and sport	2.1	2.2	1.6	4.6	2.6
Sales and service	20.9	21.7	19.5	27.2	19.3
Trades, transport and equipment operators	36.0	34.5	37.7	35.7	26.5
Occupations unique to primary industry	10.0	11.1	9.2	5.4	5.5
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	7.2	7.3	7.5	2.5	7.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

High unemployment rates

Unemployment rates for Aboriginal women were twice as high as those of their non-Aboriginal counterparts. In 2006, 13.5% of Aboriginal women were unemployed, compared with a rate of 6.4% for non-Aboriginal women. The unemployment rate among Aboriginal women, though, was lower than that experienced by Aboriginal men, 16.1% of whom were unemployed that year (to be considered unemployed, a person must be without paid work or self-employment work and be available for work or looking for work or be on a temporary lay-off or have arrangements to start a new job within four weeks).

As with the overall population, unemployment rates among Aboriginal women were highest for young adults. In 2006, the unemployment rate for Aboriginal women aged 15 to 24 was 20.1%, compared with 12.1% of those aged 25 to 54. This pattern held for the three Aboriginal groups. Comparing young women (15 to 24 years) to those aged 25 to 54, the unemployment rates for Inuit were 23.1% and 15.1% respectively; for First Nations women 25.4% and 14.5%; and for Métis women 13.9% and 8.2%.

Unemployment rates differed depending on where Aboriginal women lived. Among First Nations women, those living on reserve experienced the highest unemployment rate (20.6%), while the unemployment rate for First Nations women not living on reserve was 13.8%. Inuit women living in Inuit Nunangat had an unemployment rate of 17.5%, compared to 14.1% for those living outside of Inuit Nunangat. For all Métis women, the unemployment rate was 9.5% in 2006; in rural areas it was 10.4%.

Sharper decrease in employment for Aboriginal people during labour market downturn

Research has shown that prior to the economic downturn that started in 2008, Aboriginal people had lower employment rates when compared to the non-Aboriginal population.¹⁸⁰ When the labour market downturn began between 2008 and 2009, Labour Force Survey (LFS) data revealed that Aboriginal people experienced sharper declines in employment rates than non-Aboriginal people.¹⁸¹

According to the LFS, between 2008 and 2009, employment rates fell by 3.2 percentage points among Aboriginal people and 1.9 percentage points among non-Aboriginal people. As a result, the already existing gap between the groups widened.

At the same time, the unemployment rate rose more sharply for Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal people. In 2009, the unemployment rate for Aboriginal people reached 13.9%, up from 10.4% in 2008. In comparison, 8.1% of non-Aboriginal people were unemployed in 2009, up from 6.0% the previous year.

Unemployment rates decrease with higher levels of education

Generally speaking, the gap between the unemployment rates of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women is smaller among those with higher levels of education. In 2006, for those women aged 25 to 54 without high school completion, the unemployment rate was 20.5% for Aboriginal women and 9.2% for non-Aboriginal women, a gap of 11.3 percentage points. For those with university degrees, the unemployment rate was 5.8% for Aboriginal women and 4.6% for non-Aboriginal women, a gap of 1.2 percentage points.

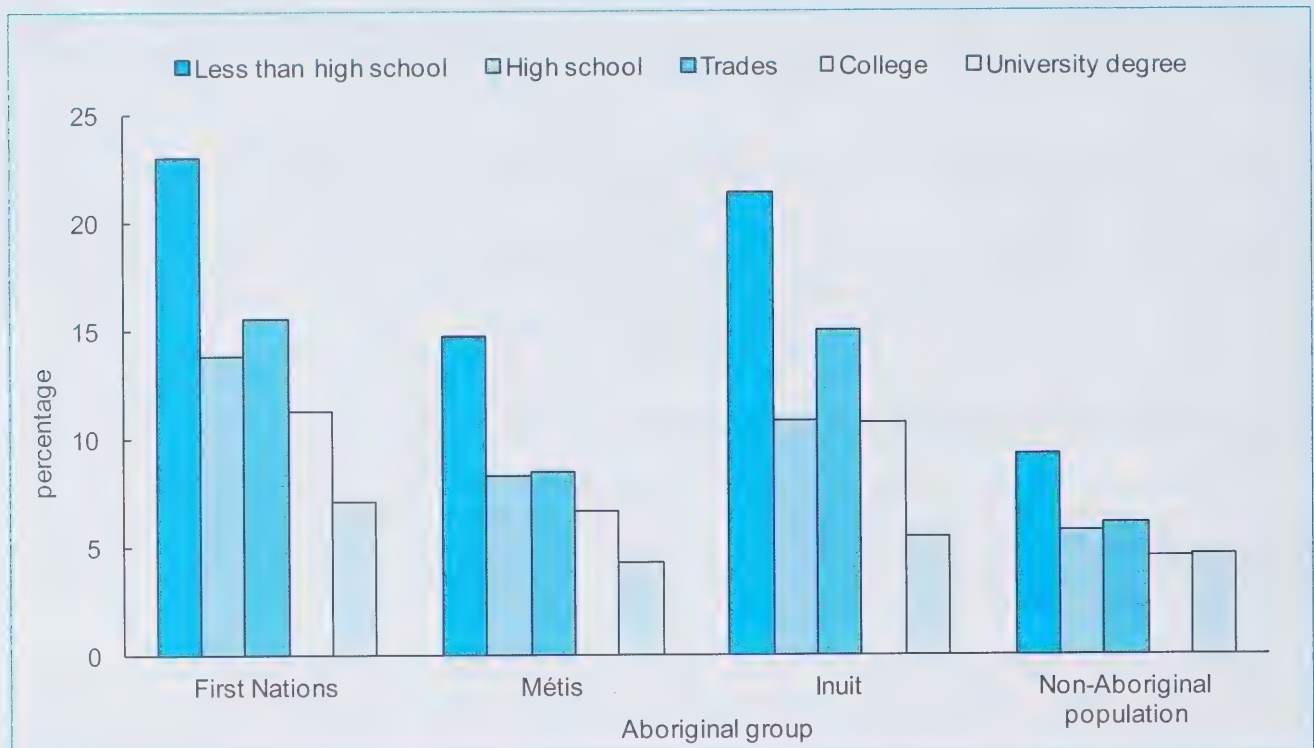
Unemployment rates for Aboriginal women remain higher than non-Aboriginal women regardless of education level, with the exceptions of Métis and Inuit women with university degrees. In 2006, the unemployment rates of Métis and Inuit women with university degrees were about the same as that for non-Aboriginal women. Métis women with university degrees had an unemployment rate of 4.2%, compared to 4.6% of their non-Aboriginal counterparts (Chart 8.6). The unemployment rate for Inuit women was slightly higher at 5.4%. It is important to note that the proportion of women with university degrees is quite different among these groups (11% of Métis women and 5% of Inuit women compared to 26% of non-Aboriginal women).

180. Zietsma, D. May 2010. 'Aboriginal People Living Off-reserve and the Labour Market: Estimates from the Labour Force Survey, 2008/2009'. *The Aboriginal Labour Force Analysis Series* (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 71-588-X, no. 2).

181. The Labour Force Survey includes Aboriginal people living in the provinces and excludes those who live in reserve communities.

Chart 8.6

Unemployment rates by highest level of schooling, women aged 25 to 54, by Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Some research has found that those with higher levels of education were less affected by the recent economic downturn than those with lower levels of education.¹⁸² According to the Labour Force Survey between 2008 and 2009, Aboriginal people with less than a high school diploma as well as those with some postsecondary education¹⁸³ had larger increases in their unemployment rates than Aboriginal people who had completed postsecondary education.

Inuit harvesting activities

When looking at labour force statistics, it is important to keep in mind that these data do not always reflect the complex work situation of Aboriginal people, especially those living in rural or remote communities. Official unemployment rates, for example, may not always reflect work that is carried out for which no payment is received. Work of this type is common in many Aboriginal communities where large amounts of time are spent fishing, trapping, hunting, sewing, and caring for children of friends and family members. Also, there is much seasonal work in many Aboriginal communities.

182. Zietsma, D. May 2010. *Aboriginal People Living Off-reserve and the Labour Market: Estimates from the Labour Force Survey, 2008-2009*. The Aboriginal Labour Force Analysis Series (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 71-588-X, no. 2).

183. Includes those who only graduated high school.

According to the 2006 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS), the majority of Inuit women aged 15 years and over (62%) in Inuit Nunangat reported harvesting country foods such as seals, whale, caribou, fish and berries. Within Inuit Nunangat, 65% of Inuit lived in homes where at least half of the meat and fish consumed was country food, and 59% of Inuit children ate wild meat at least 3 days per week. A strong tradition of food sharing is reflected in the APS data. The majority of Inuit adults in each of the four Inuit regions reported living in homes where country food was shared with people in other households.¹⁸⁴

For more information about different types of unpaid work, please see the forthcoming chapter 'Families and unpaid work'.

Income

The incomes of Aboriginal women aged 15 years and over in Canada tend to be relatively low. In 2005, the median income¹⁸⁵ of Aboriginal women was \$15,654, about \$5,000 less than the figure for non-Aboriginal women, who had a median income of \$20,640 that year. The median income of Aboriginal women was also about \$3,000 less than that of Aboriginal men, for whom the figure was \$18,714 (Table 8.9).

First Nations women had a median income at \$14,490. For Inuit women, the median income was \$16,599 and for Métis women, \$17,520 (Table 8.9). The income of Aboriginal women varies depending on their area of residence. For First Nations women, those living on reserve had a median income of \$12,466 while the median income for all First Nations women living off reserve was \$16,149. For Métis women living in rural areas, the median income was \$16,144. Median income for Inuit women living in Inuit Nunangat (\$17,141) was higher than for Inuit women living outside of Inuit Nunangat (\$15,383). It is important to note that the cost of living in Inuit Nunangat is relatively high compared to southern Canada.^{186, 187} For example, in December 2004, a 5 lb bag of potatoes could be purchased for \$2.49 in Ottawa, Ontario. The cost for the same item in Clyde River, Nunavut was \$7.49.¹⁸⁸

Income gap

Recent research measuring the income gap between Aboriginal people and the rest of Canada found that at the Master's or Bachelor's degree levels, Aboriginal people had essentially the same median incomes as non-Aboriginal people in 2006. 'Perhaps most startling, Aboriginal women who have obtained at least a Bachelor's degree actually have higher median incomes than non-Aboriginal Canadian women with equivalent education. This is the only segment of Aboriginal society that exceeds the median incomes of their non-Aboriginal counterparts.' The study also found that below the Bachelor's degree level, Aboriginal people consistently made far less than non-Aboriginal people with the same education level.¹⁸⁹

184. Statistics Canada. December 2008. *Fact Sheet: Inuit Health, Education and Country Food Harvesting*. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 89-637-X 2008004).

185. Median income is calculated from the unrounded number of individuals with income in that group. This concept and procedure applies to total income, employment income, wages and salaries, and any other component of income. The median income marks the midpoint; in other words, it is the point where the incomes of half of individuals fall below the median, and half are above the median.

186. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. 2008. *Revised Northern Food Basket*. <http://www.ainc-ina.gc.ca/nth/fon/fc/pubs/ntb/ntb-eng.asp> (accessed May 16, 2011)

187. Bernard, N. 2006. *Nunavik Comparative Price Index 2006*. <http://www.chaireconditionautochtone.fss.ulaval.ca/documents/pdf/135.pdf> (accessed May 26, 2011)

188. Statistics Canada. March 2006. *Harvesting and community well-being among Inuit in the Canadian Arctic: Preliminary findings from the 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey – Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic 2001*. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 89-619-XIE), p. 9.

189. Wilson, D. and D. Macdonald. April 2010. *The Income Gap Between Aboriginal Peoples and the Rest of Canada*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

Sources of income

The largest share of income of Aboriginal women aged 15 years and over comes from employment sources. In 2005, 70% of all the income of Aboriginal women came from employment income.

One-quarter of Aboriginal women's income came from government transfer payments, such as child benefits and old age security pensions and guaranteed income supplements. In 2005, 9% of all income of Aboriginal women came from child benefits. This figure was 12% for First Nations women, 11% for Inuit women, 5% for Métis women, and 3% for non-Aboriginal women. Child benefits refer to payments received under the Canada Child Tax Benefit program during calendar year 2005 by parents with dependent children under 18 years of age.

Below the low income cut-off (LICO)

It should be noted that the calculations of the low income before tax cut-offs (LICO-BT)¹⁹⁰ do not include people living on Indian reserves, as well as those living in the territories. This means that Inuit who live in the territories (57% of all Inuit women) are missing from the figures for Inuit living below the LICO-BT. Also missing are First Nations people living on reserve (41% of the total female First Nations population).

Aboriginal women aged 15 years and over experienced relatively high rates of low income. In 2005, 30% of all Aboriginal females were classified as living in a household with incomes below Statistics Canada's LICO-BT. This was almost double the figure for non-Aboriginal women, 16% of whom had low incomes that year. The share of Aboriginal women with low incomes was also higher than that of Aboriginal men (26%).

In 2005, 37% First Nations females (off-reserve) were living below the LICO-BT, while the figures were 23% among Métis and Inuit females respectively.

190. The low income before tax cut-off (LICO-BT) is an income threshold, determined by analysing family expenditure data, below which families will devote a larger share of income to the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than the average family would. It is not a measure of poverty.

Incomplete high school

In 2006, 35% of Aboriginal women aged 25 and over had not graduated from high school, whereas the figure was 20% among non-Aboriginal women and 39% among Aboriginal men (Table 8.11).

More than half of Inuit women aged 25 and over had less than high school (53%), compared to 39% of First Nations women and 27% of Métis women. The percentages of women without high school decreased from 2001 to 2006 for First Nations women (from 48% to 39%) and Métis women (from 40% to 27%). For Inuit, the percentage of women aged 25 and over without high school decreased from 57% in 2001 to 53% in 2006.¹⁹¹

When asked why they had not completed elementary or secondary school in the 2006 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, about one in five (23%) Aboriginal women aged 15 to 34 reported 'pregnancy or to take care of children.' About 17% reported 'boredom'. In contrast, about one quarter (26%) of young Aboriginal men cited 'wanted to work' as the reason for leaving school early and 17% said that they were 'bored' with school.

The Youth in Transition Survey found similar results; among 18- to 20- year olds in the total Canadian population 'dissatisfaction with school or other school-related problems' was cited more often as the primary reason for leaving. But some dropouts leave for other primary reasons; work for young men and pregnancy and child rearing for young women.¹⁹²

191. When comparisons are made to 2001, 2006 data have been adjusted to account for the addition of some Indian reserves and settlements that were incompletely enumerated in 2001. That is, only those Indian reserves that were enumerated in both census years (2006 and 2001) were included.

192. Bowlby, Jeffrey W. and K. McMullen. January 2002. *At a Crossroads: First Results for the 18 to 20-Year-Old Cohort of the Youth in Transition Survey*. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 81-591-XIE), p. 42.

Table 8.11

Highest level of educational attainment of women aged 15 years and over, by Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2006

Level of education	First Nations Métis Inuit				Non-Aboriginal
	Aboriginal	Nations	Métis	Inuit	
	percentage				
15 years and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No certificate, diploma or degree	41.2	45.6	32.3	60.0	22.8
High school certificate or equivalent	22.9	21.1	26.8	14.5	26.8
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	8.2	7.4	9.6	6.6	7.6
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	17.2	15.8	19.8	13.5	19.2
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	3.4	3.6	3.4	2.0	5.0
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor's level or above	7.1	6.6	8.1	3.5	18.5
15 to 24 years old	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No certificate, diploma or degree	59.9	65.8	48.0	75.2	36.1
High school certificate or equivalent	27.4	24.4	34.1	16.7	36.7
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	2.8	2.4	3.4	2.5	3.5
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	6.7	5.2	9.3	4.6	12.8
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	1.0	0.9	1.3	0.2	2.4
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor's level or above	2.2	1.3	3.9	0.9	8.5
25 years and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No certificate, diploma or degree	35.1	38.8	27.2	53.2	20.5
High school certificate or equivalent	21.4	19.9	24.5	13.4	25.0
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	10.0	9.1	11.5	8.4	8.4
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	20.6	19.3	23.2	17.5	20.4
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	4.2	4.4	4.1	2.8	5.5
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor's level or above	8.7	8.4	9.4	4.6	20.3
25 to 54 years old	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No certificate, diploma or degree	29.6	33.6	21.0	48.6	11.4
High school certificate or equivalent	23.1	21.8	26.3	14.3	24.5
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	10.3	9.3	11.9	9.0	8.9
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	22.9	21.4	26.0	19.9	23.9
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	4.5	4.7	4.3	3.0	5.4
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor's level or above	9.5	9.1	10.6	5.1	25.9
55 years and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No certificate, diploma or degree	54.2	57.1	49.0	73.4	35.6
High school certificate or equivalent	15.2	13.4	18.3	9.6	25.9
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	8.9	8.3	10.3	6.1	7.4
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	12.6	12.1	13.6	6.8	14.5
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	3.4	3.4	3.4	1.6	5.6
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor's level or above	5.7	5.7	5.5	2.4	10.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Youth aged 15- to 19-year-olds not in school: Comparing internationally

In 2006, 29% of Aboriginal teenagers aged 15 to 19 were no longer pursuing a formal education (29% of Aboriginal teen boys and 28% of Aboriginal teen girls). This was higher than the average of their non-Aboriginal counterparts (19%) in Canada. Compared with the youth populations of other countries (Indigenous and non-Indigenous combined), the percentage of Aboriginal 15- to 19-year olds not in education in Canada was almost double the average of 15% across the 31 member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2008.^{193, 194}

Aboriginal women less likely to have a university degree

There is a gap between the proportions of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women with university degrees. In 2006, 9% of Aboriginal women aged 25 and over had a university degree, compared with 20% of their non-Aboriginal counterparts (Table 8.11).

Aboriginal women were slightly more likely to have a university degree than Aboriginal men, 6% of whom had completed university. Indeed, women made up 63% of Aboriginal people aged 25 and over with a university degree in 2006. This gender difference was not observed in the non-Aboriginal population; in 2006, women made up 50% of those aged 25 and over with a university degree.

In 2006, among women aged 25 years and over, 9% of Métis women had a university degree, as did 8% of First Nations women and 5% of Inuit women (Table 8.11).

At the same time, Aboriginal women were as likely as other women to have a diploma or certificate from a community college. In 2006, 21% of Aboriginal women aged 25 and over were community college graduates, while the figure was 20% among non-Aboriginal women in this age range. Aboriginal women were also more likely than Aboriginal men, 21% versus 14%, to have a community college certificate or diploma.

Almost one in four (23%) Métis women over the age of 25 had a diploma or certificate from a community college, compared to 19% of First Nations women and 18% of Inuit women (Table 8.11).

The Aboriginal Peoples Survey asked respondents who had taken some education, but who were not currently pursuing postsecondary studies, about the reasons why they had not finished their studies. Of First Nations women living off reserve, Métis women and Inuit women who had started, but had not completed a postsecondary program, 15% reported 'financial reasons' as the reason they had not finished their postsecondary schooling, while 14% 'wanted to work'. About 11% reported that they had to 'care for their own child or pregnancy' as the reason for not completing their postsecondary schooling, and 13% reported 'other family responsibilities.' About 12% reported that they had 'lost interest'.

193. The Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

194. Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics Division. September 2010. *Education Indicators in Canada: An International Perspective*. (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 81-604-X).

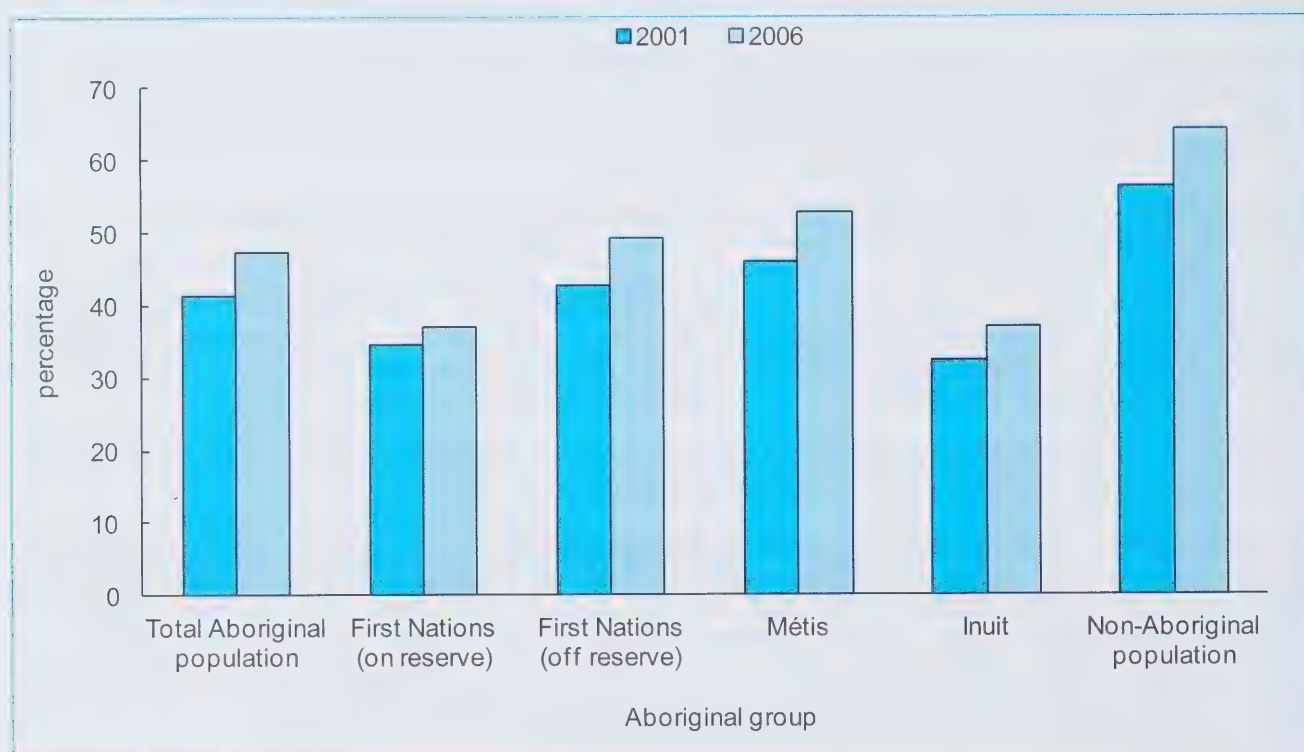
More Aboriginal women achieving postsecondary qualifications

Higher percentages of Aboriginal women between the ages of 25 and 54 reported completed postsecondary education between 2001 and 2006. In 2006, 47% of Aboriginal women between 25 and 54 had completed postsecondary school, up from 41% in 2001.¹⁹⁵ This higher rate of completed postsecondary schooling among women was seen for First Nations, Métis and Inuit women.

While the percentage of Aboriginal women who had completed postsecondary schooling has increased, the gap between the percentages of Aboriginal women and non-Aboriginal women with postsecondary schooling remained. This is because the percentage of non-Aboriginal women with postsecondary education also increased in this time period (Chart 8.7).

Chart 8.7

Percentage of women aged 25 to 54 with postsecondary qualifications, by Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2001 and 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

195. When comparisons are made to 2001, 2006 data have been adjusted to account for the addition of some Indian reserves and settlements that were incompletely enumerated in 2001. That is, only those Indian reserves that were enumerated in both census years (2006 and 2001) were included.

Residential school attendance

The residential school system operated across Canada between 1830 and the 1990s, peaking in 1931 when 80 residential schools were in operation. Residential schools were largely operated by churches in partnership with the federal government.¹⁹⁶

The 2006 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS) asked respondents: Were you ever a student at a federal residential school or industrial school? They were also asked if they had any family members who were ever students at residential schools.

Among First Nations women living off reserve, 12% of those over the 25 years and over had attended residential school. Older First Nations women were more likely to have attended residential school; in 2006 about one in five First Nations women living off reserve 55 years of age and over had attended a residential school.

There is evidence that higher proportions of First Nations women living on reserve had attended residential school. The 2002/2003 Regional Health Survey found that on-reserve, 20% of First Nations women 18 years and over had attended a residential school.¹⁹⁷

In 2006, 19% of Inuit women 25 years and over reported attending residential school. Inuit women between the ages of 45 and 54 were the most likely to have attended residential schools —40% of those 45 to 54 years and 31% of those 55 to 64 years reported attending a residential school.

Relatively few Métis women 25 years and over (3%) reported having attended residential school.

The last residential school for Aboriginal children in Canada closed in the 1990s but the impacts will affect many generations of First Nations peoples, their children and their communities.^{198,199} Indeed of those 15 years and over, 34% of First Nations women living off reserve, 15% of Métis women and 21% of Inuit women reported having a parent or grandparent who attended residential school. It should be noted that many women reported that they did not know if their parents or grandparents had attended residential school (21% of First Nations women living off reserve, 21% of Inuit women and 27% of Métis women). Therefore, it is possible that the proportion with a parent or grandparent who had attended residential school is higher.

196. Aboriginal Healing Foundation. 2002. *The Healing Has Begun: An Operational Update from the Aboriginal Healing Foundation*.

197. First Nations Centre at the National Health Aboriginal Organization, on behalf of the First Nations Information Governance Centre. June 2006. *First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey (RHS) 2002/2003: Report on Selected Indicators by Gender*. http://rhs-ersca/sites/default/files/ENpdf/RHS_2002/rhs2002-03-report_on_selected_indicators_by_gender.pdf (accessed May 27, 2011).

198. Dion Stout, M. and G. Kipling, on behalf of The Aboriginal Healing Foundation. 2003. *Aboriginal People, Resilience and the Residential School Legacy*. <http://www.ahf.ca/publications/research-series> (accessed May 27, 2011).

199. Legacy of Hope Foundation. 2008. "Intergenerational impacts", *Where are the children — Healing of the legacy of the residential schools*, <http://www.wherethechildren.ca/en/exhibit/impacts.html> (accessed June 28, 2011).

Spousal violence

Previous studies have shown that higher proportions of Aboriginal women experience spousal violence compared to non-Aboriginal women.^{200,201,202} Higher rates of spousal violence among Aboriginal women may be due at least in part to the presence of certain risk factors. Aboriginal women are younger than the total Canadian population, they have lower average incomes, they have higher rates of alcohol abuse and are more likely to live in common-law unions.²⁰³ Other factors that have been linked to violence in Aboriginal communities include the breakdown of family life resulting from residential school experience, and the impact of colonization on traditional values and culture.²⁰⁴

Through the General Social Survey (GSS) it is possible to examine spousal violence rates among Aboriginal people.²⁰⁵ The GSS findings presented here are only for Aboriginal people living in the ten provinces.²⁰⁶ It is important to note that most Inuit women live in the territories (in 2006 about 57% of Inuit women and girls were living in the territories).

In 2009, about 15%²⁰⁷ of Aboriginal women who had a spouse or common-law partner²⁰⁸ reported that they had experienced spousal violence in the previous five years. In the case of non-Aboriginal women the proportion was 6% (Table 8.12).²⁰⁹

200. Brzozowski, J., A. Taylor-Butts and S. Johnson. June 2006. 'Victimization and Offending among the Aboriginal population in Canada'. *Juristat*. Volume 26, no. 3. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 85-002-XIE).

201. Brzozowski, J. and R. Brazeau. July 2008. *What are the trends in self-reported spousal violence in Canada?* (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 89-630-X).

202. Perreault, S. March 2011. Violent Victimization of Aboriginal people in the Canadian provinces, 2009. *Juristat*. Volume 31, no. 1. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 85-002-X).

203. Johnson, H. October 2006. *Measuring Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends 2006*. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 85-570-XWE).

204. *Ibid.* p. 14.

205. The question which was used to identify the Aboriginal population in the 2009 victimization survey is different than that used in 2004 and 1999. The 2009 results for the Aboriginal population should not, therefore, be directly compared with those from previous victimization surveys. Households in the ten provinces were selected by a telephone sampling method called Random Digit Dialling (RDD). Households without telephones or with only cellular phone service were excluded. It should be noted that the proportion of households with a landline telephone may be relatively low on some Indian reserves and settlements.

206. Information on victimization in the territories was collected using a different methodology and results will be published at a later date.

207. 'E' indicates that this estimate should be used with caution. See Table 8.12 for more details.

208. Includes legally married, common-law and same-sex spouses, those separated from such unions and divorced spouses.

209. Brennan, S. May 2011. 'Violent victimization of Aboriginal women in the Canadian provinces, 2009'. *Juristat*. (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-XIE).

Table 8.12

Self-reported spousal violence for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations, aged 15 and over, Canada, 2009

Victims of spousal violence	Aboriginal women	Non-Aboriginal women percentage
Percentage who reported being physically or sexually victimized by a spouse* in the previous 5 years	15 ^E	6
Of those who had been physically or sexually victimized by a spouse in the previous 5 years, percentage who reported that they:		
had been sexually assaulted, beaten, choked, threatened with a gun or knife sustained an injury	48 ^E	32
feared for their life	58	41
	52 ^E	31

* significantly different from estimate for total Canadian women at $p < 0.05$

Note: Includes legally married, common-law and same-sex spouses, those separated from such unions and divorced spouses.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2009.

There is evidence that many Aboriginal women who are victims of spousal violence experience severe and potentially life threatening violence. In 2009, 58% of Aboriginal women who experienced spousal violence reported that they had sustained an injury compared to 41% of non-Aboriginal women. Almost half (48%) of Aboriginal women who had experienced spousal violence reported that they had been sexually assaulted, beaten, choked, or threatened with a gun or knife. A similar proportion (52%) of Aboriginal women who had been victims of spousal violence reported that there were times when they feared for their life (Table 8.12).

About 38% of Aboriginal women who were victims of spousal violence reported that the incident came to the attention of the police. About one-third (31%) of those who said that the police found out about the violence contacted the police themselves.

Further, about one in three (34%) Aboriginal women in a marital or common-law relationship or who have had contact with an ex-partner in the previous five years reported that they had been emotionally or financially abused by their partner. Again, this was twice the percentage of non-Aboriginal women who reported being victims of emotional or financial abuse (17%). While significantly higher percentages of Aboriginal women reported being victims of spousal violence compared to Aboriginal men, similar percentages of Aboriginal women and Aboriginal men reported being emotionally or financially abused by a spouse or partner (differences were not statistically significant).

Missing and murdered Aboriginal women

In recent years, it has come to light that many Aboriginal women in Canada have been murdered or have gone missing. For a number of reasons, these disappearances and homicides have been difficult to quantify through official statistics.²¹⁰

The Homicide Survey collects information on many socio-demographic characteristics of homicide victims, including Aboriginal identity when known. It is important to note that in about half of all homicides the Aboriginal identity of the victim is reported by police as unknown. For example, in 2009, police reported 610 homicides. Of these, the victim was identified as Aboriginal in 62 homicides, as non-Aboriginal in 164 homicides, and as Aboriginal identity unknown in 384 homicides (Table 8.13).

Given that the Aboriginal identity of many homicide victims is unknown, it is likely that data from the Homicide Survey undercount the true extent of the homicide of Aboriginal people. Other research stemming from the Sisters in Spirit initiative has suggested that the number of Aboriginal women in Canada who have been murdered or have gone missing in the past 20 years may be in the hundreds²¹¹.

Table 8.13
Homicide victims, by Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2009

Aboriginal identity	Number of victims
Aboriginal identity unknown	384
Non-Aboriginal	164
Aboriginal	62
Aboriginal female victims	16
Aboriginal male victims	46
Total victims	610

Source: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey, 2009.

The data available show that Aboriginal people are more likely to be victims of homicide than non-Aboriginal people. While Aboriginal people represented about 4% of the total Canadian population in 2006 (the most recent population count available), 27% of homicide victims in 2009 (where the Aboriginal identity of the victim was known) were Aboriginal people. Among homicide victims that were reported to be Aboriginal people, 26% (16 victims) were women or girls (Table 8.13).

Because information about the Aboriginal identity of victims was unknown for such a large proportion of victims (63%), it was not possible to calculate a homicide rate for the Aboriginal population for 2009. However, previously released Aboriginal homicide rates have indicated that Aboriginal people are more likely to be victims of homicide than non-Aboriginal people. Between 1997 and 2000 the average homicide rate for Aboriginal people was 8.8 per 100,000 population, almost seven times higher than in the non-Aboriginal population (1.3 per 100,000 population). Between 1997 and 2000, an average of 18% of victims had an unknown Aboriginal status.²¹²

210. Department of Justice Canada. 2010. "Government of Canada takes concrete action regarding missing and murdered Aboriginal women". News release. Ottawa, Canada. http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/news-nouv/nr-cp/2010/doc_32560.html (accessed February 9, 2011).

211. Native Women's Association of Canada. 2010. *Sisters in Spirit: 2010 Research Findings*, http://www.nwac.ca/sites/default/files/imce/2010_NWAC_SIS_Report_EN.pdf (accessed on February 9, 2011).

212. Brzozowski, J., A. Taylor-Butts and S. Johnson. June 2006. 'Victimization and Offending among the Aboriginal population in Canada'. *Juristat*. Volume 26, no. 3. (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-XIE).

Between 1997 and 2000, the rate of homicide for Aboriginal females was 5.4 per 100,000 population, compared to 0.8 per 100,000 for non-Aboriginal victims (almost seven times higher). The rate of homicide was higher among Aboriginal male victims – 12.2 per 100,000 population compared to 1.8 for non-Aboriginal males.²¹³

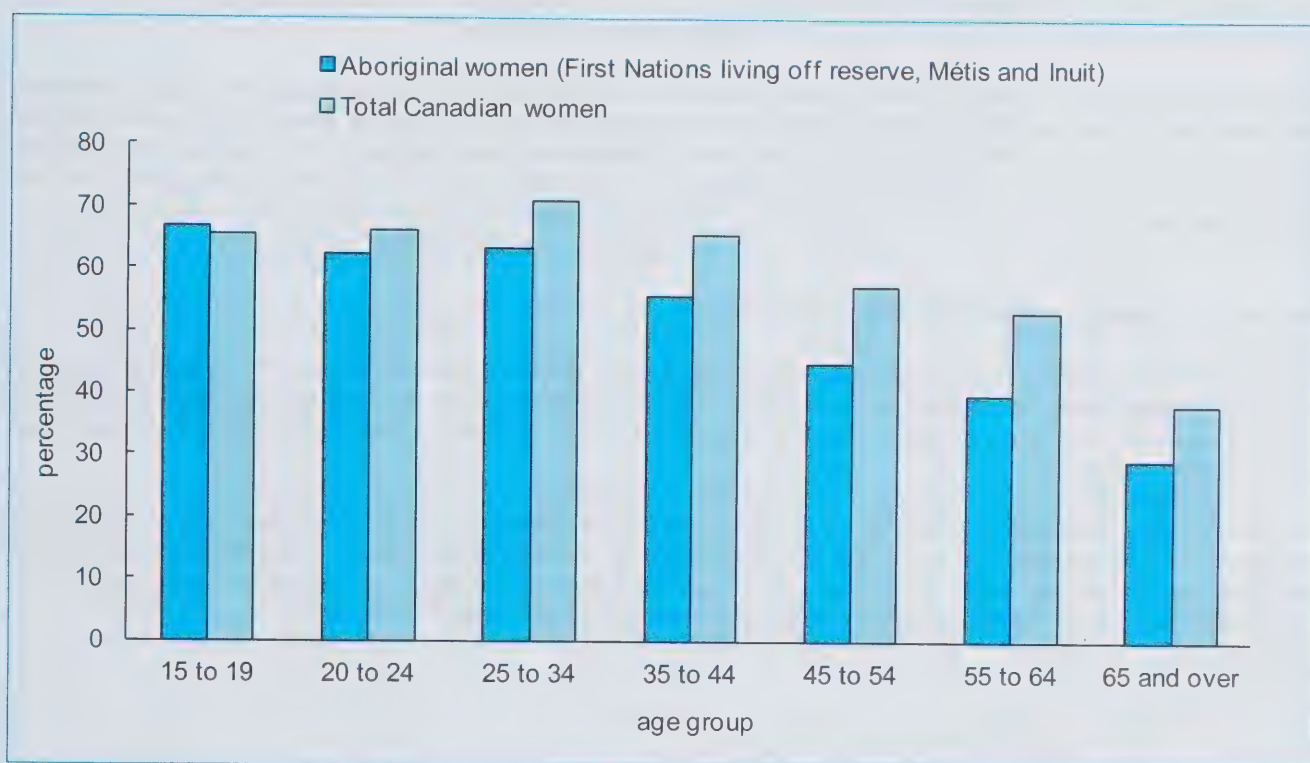
For more information, please see the chapter on women and the criminal justice system.

Health

In the 2006 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, among women 15 years and over, 50% of First Nations women living off reserve, 58% of Métis women and 48% of Inuit women self-reported that their health was either excellent or very good (Chart 8.8). The share of Aboriginal women describing their health in these terms was smaller than the figure for all Aboriginal men, 58% of whom described their health as excellent or very good. It was also smaller than the percentage of women in the total Canadian population who reported excellent or very good health (62%); age standardization was done to reflect to younger age structure of the Aboriginal population. Data for the total Canadian population comes from the 2007 Canadian Community Health Survey.

Chart 8.8

Percentage of women reporting excellent or very good health, by age group, Canada, 2006/2007



Sources: Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2006, and Canadian Community Health Survey, 2007.

The gap between the self-perceived health ratings of Aboriginal women and the total Canadian female population widens with each age group. In 2006, the difference between the Aboriginal girls aged 15 to 19 (67%) and the total female population in the same age range (65%) who described their health as either excellent or very good was not statistically significant. In contrast, 40% of Aboriginal women aged 55 to 64 compared with 53% of all Canadian women in this age group reported their health as either excellent or very good; this is a gap of 13 percentage points. This trend is observed among all three Aboriginal groups (Chart 8.8).

213. Ibid.

Métis women—Excerpt from ‘Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2006: An overview of the Health of the Métis population’

In 2006, more than half of Métis adults (58%) stated that their health was excellent or very good; similar ratings were observed for men and women. Métis women were more likely (57%) than men (50%) to indicate they had at least one chronic condition. They were also more likely to report two or more chronic conditions (31%) relative to men (24%).

The chronic conditions that were reported more often by Métis women than men were arthritis and/or rheumatism (24% versus 18%), asthma (17% versus 11%), and bronchitis (8% versus 5%). Métis women and men reported similar rates of high blood pressure, ulcers, diabetes and heart problems.

Between 2001 and 2006, a small but increasing gap has developed between Métis men and women in terms of unmet health care needs. In 2001, the proportion of Métis women (12%) and men (11%) with unmet health care needs was about the same. However, in 2006, the figure declined to 9% for Métis men but was unchanged for women. A similar gap was observed in the total population of Canada in 2005 (men, 10%; women, 13%).

This gap may be partly accounted for by the differing experiences women have with health care utilization compared to men. For example, other research has found that men in the total population of Canada had significantly lower wait times than women when accessing diagnostic tests.²¹⁴

Several reasons were provided by Métis adults to explain why they did not receive care when it was needed. The most commonly reported reasons for not receiving care included ‘long wait times’ (23%) and ‘care not available at the time required’ (12%). A smaller share of Métis reported that they didn’t receive care because ‘care was not available in their area’ (7%) or they ‘decided not to seek care’ (7%). Reasons were similar for both men and women.

Living with chronic conditions

While most First Nations women (off reserve), Métis women and Inuit women reported their health status in generally positive terms, more than half reported a chronic health condition. In 2006, 60% of Aboriginal women aged 20 and over had been diagnosed with a chronic condition by a health professional. This compared with 52% of Aboriginal men.

The Aboriginal population structure is much younger than the non-Aboriginal population. As a result, it is necessary to age standardize these two populations when making comparisons. In 2006, 46% of the non-Aboriginal population had been diagnosed with at least one chronic condition, compared to the figures of 51% for the off-reserve First Nations population, 50% for Métis and 39% for Inuit.²¹⁵

214. Kazanjian, A., D. Morettin and R. Cho. August 2004. *Health Care Utilization by Canadian Women*, BMC Women's Health 4 (Suppl 1: S33).

215. Garner, R., G. Carrière and C. Sanmartin. June 2010. *The Health of First Nations Living Off-reserve, Inuit, and Métis Adults in Canada: The Impact of Socio-economic Status on Inequalities in Health*. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 82-622-X).

Aboriginal men were less likely to have been diagnosed with chronic conditions compared to women. In 2006, 61% of First Nations women aged 20 and over living off reserve had been diagnosed by a health professional with one or more chronic conditions, compared to 53% of their male counterparts. For Métis women and men, these figures were 60% and 53%.

In 2006, 51% of Inuit women had been diagnosed by a health professional with a chronic condition, compared to 39% of Inuit men. It is possible that these relatively low percentages of diagnosis with chronic conditions are linked to the poorer access to health professionals in Inuit Nunangat, where most Inuit live.²¹⁶

As with the overall female population, the percentage of Aboriginal women with a chronic condition rises in the older age groups. Indeed, in 2006, 88% of First Nations women aged 65 and over living off reserve had been diagnosed by a health professional with at least one chronic health condition, as had 92% of Métis senior women and 89% of Inuit senior women (differences are not statistically significant).

Inuit women—Excerpt from: 'Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2006: Inuit Health and Social Conditions'

For adults in all age groups, Inuit were less likely to report excellent or very good health than were their counterparts in the total Canadian population. There were no differences between Inuit men and women. About 50% of Inuit adults stated that their health was excellent or very good in 2006.

Inuit in all age groups were less likely than those in the general population to have seen or talked on the phone with a medical doctor in the 12 months prior to the survey. About 56% of Inuit adults had contact with a medical doctor, compared with 79% in the general population (after standardizing for age).

In most Inuit communities, the point of first contact with the medical system was with a nurse. In the year prior to the survey, 7 in 10 Inuit adults living in Inuit communities had contact with a nurse.

About 10% of Inuit adults in Inuit Nunangat stated there was a time they required health care but did not receive it, about the same percentage as for Inuit living outside Inuit Nunangat. However, reasons for not receiving care were different. For Inuit outside Inuit Nunangat, the most frequent reason given was long wait times. In Inuit Nunangat, this was also one of the most frequent responses, although a similar percentage of respondents also cited the lack of availability of care in the area, or at the time required.

Some Inuit are required to leave their communities for extended periods to receive health care. About 5% of Inuit adults in Inuit Nunangat stated there had been a time during the year before the survey when they had been temporarily away from their home for one month or more due to illness.

About 58% of Inuit adults smoked on a daily basis, and another 8% smoked occasionally. The daily rate was over three times the 17% among all adults in Canada, according to the 2005 Canadian Community Health Survey.

216. Tait, H. December 2008. *Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2006: Inuit Health and Social Conditions*. (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 89-637-X – No. 001).

Arthritis or rheumatism the most common chronic condition among Aboriginal women

As with the overall population, arthritis or rheumatism was the most common chronic condition diagnosed among Aboriginal women. Among each Aboriginal group (First Nations women living off reserve, Métis and Inuit women), the order in prevalence of specific chronic conditions was the same (arthritis and rheumatism was most common, followed by high blood pressure and asthma (Table 8.14).

Table 8.14

Unadjusted and age-standardized prevalence of diagnosed chronic conditions for women aged 20 years and over, by Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2006/2007

Chronic condition	Unadjusted				Age-standardized to age structure of total Canadian population				
	Total Aboriginal women ¹	First Nations women living off reserve	Métis women	Inuit women	Total Canadian women percentage	Total Aboriginal women ¹	First Nations women living off reserve	Métis women	Inuit women
Arthritis or rheumatism	27.2	28.2	26.6	19.2	20.5	33.1 *	33.3 *	32.8 *	28.5 *
High blood pressure (hypertension)	17.1	17.6	17.3	13.7	18.9	22.0 *	21.9 *	22.6 *	19.7
Asthma	15.8	16.2	16.1	10.5	9.0	15.8 *	15.9 *	16.1 *	12.4 *
Stomach problems or intestinal ulcers ²	14.4	14.6	14.4	10.1	3.3	15.6 *	15.6 *	15.6 *	11.4 *
Diabetes	8.4	9.6	7.5	5.6	5.8	11.1 *	12.0 *	10.0 *	9.7 *
Heart problems	7.6	7.8	7.5	6.5	4.7	9.8 *	9.5 *	9.8 *	8.8 *
Cancer	4.5	4.2	5.3	3.7 ^E	1.6	5.6 *	5.0 *	6.7 *	5.3 ^{E*}

* significantly different from estimate for total Canadian women at $p < 0.05$

1. Total Aboriginal women includes First Nations women living off reserve, Métis women and Inuit women.

2. The 2006 Aboriginal Peoples Survey asked respondents if they had 'stomach problems or intestinal ulcers' while the Canadian Community Health Survey 2007 asked respondents if they had 'intestinal or stomach ulcers'.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2006, and Canadian Community Health Survey, 2007.

In 2006, 28% of First Nations women aged 20 and over living off reserve had been diagnosed with arthritis or rheumatism. About 18% had high blood pressure, 16% had asthma, 15% had stomach problems or intestinal ulcers, and 10% had diabetes.

Among Métis women aged 20 and over, arthritis and rheumatism was the most commonly diagnosed chronic condition (27%). This was followed by high blood pressure (17%), asthma (16%), stomach problems or intestinal ulcers (14%), heart problems (7%) and diabetes (7%).

In 2006, nearly one-fifth (19%) of Inuit women had been diagnosed with arthritis or rheumatism while 14% had been diagnosed with high blood pressure. One in ten Inuit women were also diagnosed with asthma (10%) and stomach problems or ulcers (10%).

There is higher prevalence of these chronic conditions (arthritis/rheumatism, high blood pressure, asthma, heart conditions, diabetes) among Aboriginal women compared to women in the overall population. For example, while 1 in 5 Canadian women 20 years and over have been diagnosed with arthritis/rheumatism, about 1 in 3 First Nations women living off reserve and Métis women are living with this chronic condition (age standardized to the total Canadian age structure). The only exception is high blood pressure/hypertension where the differences in prevalence among Inuit women and all Canadian women were not statistically significant (Table 8.14).

Contact with health care professionals

As with the overall population, Aboriginal women were generally more likely than their male counterparts to have contact with health professionals. In 2006, 77% of Aboriginal women (excluding First Nations women living on reserve) reported that they had seen or talked to a family doctor or general practitioner in the 12 months prior to the survey, whereas 62% of Aboriginal men had done so (excluding First Nations men living on reserve).

Roughly equal proportions of senior men and women in the off-reserve First Nations population, in the Inuit population and in the Métis population had contact with a family doctor or general practitioner in the previous year. Among younger people, however, women were more likely to have had contact with a doctor. In 2006, among those aged 15 to 24 years, 71% of First Nations women living off reserve had seen or talked to a family doctor compared to 47% of First Nations men living off reserve. Among Métis aged 15 to 24 years, 69% of women and 47% of men had contact with a family doctor. While 55% of Inuit women between 15 and 24 years had seen or talked to a family doctor, the same was true of 38% of Inuit men in the same age group (Table 8.15).

Table 8.15

Percentage population aged 15 years and over, who had contact with a family doctor or general practitioner in the previous 12 months, by Aboriginal identity and age group, Canada, 2006

Age group	Total Aboriginal population	First Nations (off-reserve)	Métis	Inuit
		percentage		
Total population	70.0	71.3	70.8	53.3
15 to 24	57.7	59.2	58.9	46.1
25 to 34	66.4	67.2	67.8	48.9
35 to 44	69.9	71.7	69.4	54.8
45 to 54	76.8	77.7	77.6	59.5
55 to 64	82.7	85.6	80.9	65.6
65 and over	84.6	83.2	87.5	74.0
Females	76.8	77.5	77.9	59.8
15 to 24	68.6	70.7	69.2	54.9
25 to 34	75.1	75.2	77.4	57.5
35 to 44	76.0	77.2	76.5	60.1
45 to 54	80.9	80.3	82.4	64.2
55 to 64	86.0	87.0	86.1	70.0
65 and over	84.5	83.1	87.1	70.0
Males	62.1	63.6	63.0	46.3
15 to 24	46.1	47.2	47.2	37.6
25 to 34	55.4	56.5	55.9	39.7
35 to 44	62.3	64.9	60.9	47.7
45 to 54	71.8	74.3	72.3	54.5
55 to 64	78.9	83.6	76.1	60.9
65 and over	84.7	83.4	87.9	76.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Aboriginal People's Survey, 2006.

Where Aboriginal women live has an impact on their contact with health professionals. For example, the 2006 Aboriginal Peoples Survey found that 46% of Inuit women living in Inuit Nunangat had seen or talked on the telephone with a family doctor or general practitioner, compared with 79% of First Nations women not living on reserve and 78% of Métis women. In contrast, Inuit women living in Inuit Nunangat were much more likely to have had contact with nurses as opposed to other types of health professionals. These differences are likely due to the type of health care professionals available to people living in Inuit Nunangat.²¹⁷

217. Ibid.

Definitions

Age standardization – A statistical technique that removes the effects of differences in the age structure of populations, allowing populations with different age structures to be compared to each other. Differences between populations may be exaggerated or obscured when age standardization is not undertaken.

Aboriginal people – In this report, refers to those persons who reported identifying with at least one Aboriginal group, that is, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit, and/or those who reported being a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian, as defined by the *Indian Act* of Canada, and/or those who reported they were members of an Indian band or First Nation.

First Nations – The term 'First Nations' is used throughout the article to refer to people who identified as North American Indian. 'A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word 'Indian', which some people found offensive. Although the term First Nation is widely used, no legal definition of it exists. Among its uses, the term 'First Nations peoples' refers to the Indian peoples in Canada, both Status and non-Status. Some Indian peoples have also adopted the term 'First Nation' to replace the word 'band' in the name of their community.²¹⁸

Indian or North American Indian – See First Nations

Indian Act – The *Indian Act* is Canadian federal legislation, first passed in 1876, that sets out certain federal government obligations, and regulates the management of Indian reserve lands.

Inuit – Inuit means "people" in the Inuit language. Most Inuit live in the Inuvialuit region of Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik in Northern Quebec and Nunatsiavut in Labrador. Inuk is the singular form of the word Inuit (i.e. 'a person')

Inuit Nunangat – Inuit Nunangat is the homeland of **Inuit** of Canada. It includes communities in Nunatsiavut (Northern coastal Labrador), Nunavik (Northern Quebec), the territory of Nunavut and the Inuvialuit region (Northwest Territories). These regions collectively encompass the area traditionally used and occupied by Inuit in Canada.

Life expectancy – Life expectancy is the average number of years of life remaining at birth or at another age.

Métis – The Métis are people of mixed North American Indian or Inuit and European ancestry who identify themselves as Métis, as distinct from North American Indian people, Inuit or non-Aboriginal people. The Métis have a unique culture that draws on their diverse ancestral origins, such as Scottish, French, Ojibway and Cree.

Non-Status Indian – A non-Status Indian is a person who identifies as First Nations or North American Indian but is not registered under the *Indian Act*.

Registered Indian – A Status or Registered Indian is a person who is registered under the *Indian Act*. The act sets out the requirements for determining who is a Status Indian.

Status Indian – A Status or Registered Indian is a person who is registered under the *Indian Act*. The act sets out the requirements for determining who is a Status Indian.

Treaty Indian – A Treaty Indian is a Status or Registered Indian who belongs to a First Nation that signed a treaty with the Crown.

218. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Communications Branch. 2002. *Words First – An Evolving Terminology Relating to Aboriginal Peoples of Canada*.

Chapter 9

Immigrant Women

by Tina Chui

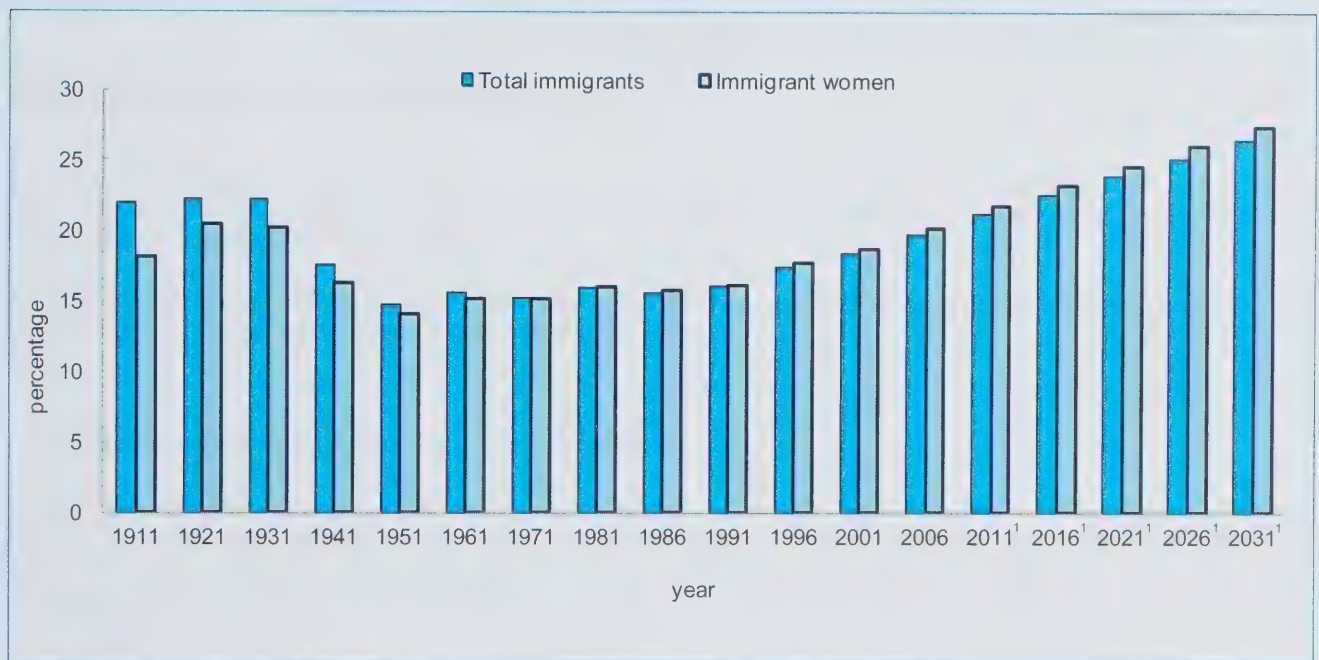
Each year, many women and men start a new life by immigrating to Canada. They join those who immigrated before them to make up Canada's immigrant population. According to the latest estimates of Canada's population, more than 280,000 immigrants came to Canada in 2010.²¹⁹ These individuals, like many before them, have contributed to the country's population growth. They helped shape today's ethnocultural mosaic and they will continue to make an impact on population diversity in the future.

One in five women is born outside Canada

The 2006 Census enumerated 3,222,795 immigrant women in Canada, who made up 20.3% of the country's female population. The proportion of immigrant women had not been at a similar level since 1931, when 20.2% of the female population was made up of immigrants (Chart 9.1).²²⁰

Chart 9.1

Immigrant women and total immigrants, Canada, 1911 to 2006 and 2011 to 2031 projections



1. Projection.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1911 to 2006; and Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population, 2006 to 2031. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2010. Catalogue no. 91-551-X.

219. Statistics Canada, 2011. *Quarterly Demographic Estimates: October to December 2010*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 91-002-X. Ottawa, Ontario. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/91-002-x/91-002-x2011001-eng.htm> (accessed April 20, 2011).

220. Chui, Tina, Kelly Tran and Hélène Maheux. 2007. *Immigration in Canada: A Portrait of the Foreign-born Population, 2006 Census*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 97-557-XIE. Ottawa, Ontario. December 4. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=97-557-XWE&lang=eng> (accessed January 13, 2011).

The population trend of immigrant women mirrors that of the total immigrant population. In 2006, the total immigrant population also made up about one-fifth (19.8%) of the total population, the highest proportion since 1931.

From 2001 to 2006, Canada's population of immigrant women grew by 14%; this growth rate was four times faster than that for Canadian-born women, which increased by 3.4%.

Canada's female population grew by 840,000 from 2001 to 2006. During that period, about 579,800 women immigrated to Canada, accounting for 69% of the growth of the female population.

If Canada's current immigration trend continues, by 2031, the country could have about 11.1 million immigrants. Slightly over one half of them (52.3%, or 5.8 million) would be women, who would then make up 27.4% of Canada's total female population, according to Statistics Canada's population projections.²²¹

In 2006, women made up a slightly larger share of the immigrant population than men: 52% of Canada's immigrants were women. In comparison, women comprised 51% of Canada's total population.

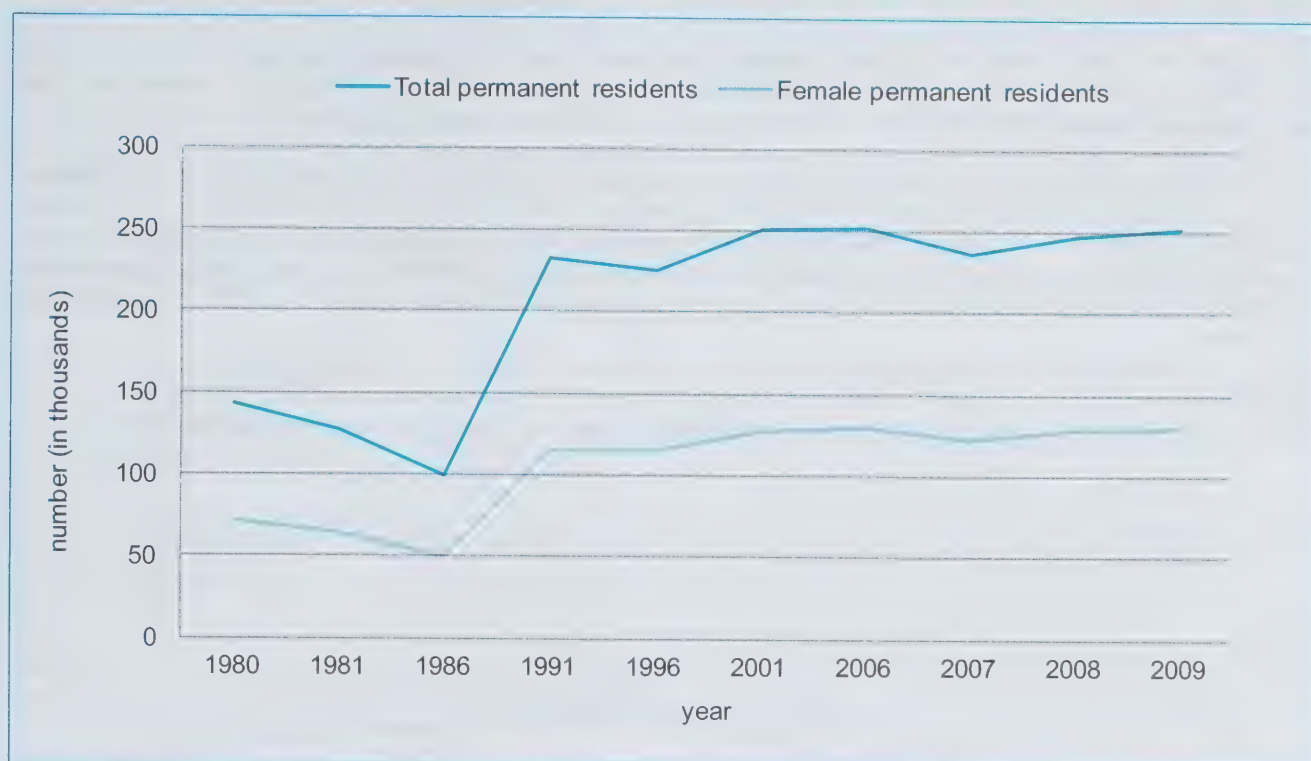
The majority come under the family or economic categories

Since 2002, Canada's immigration programs have been based on the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) and its regulations. The IRPA replaced the *Immigration Act of 1976*. While some programs may have been modified or new ones introduced since 2002, Canada's immigration policy continues to follow three broad objectives: to reunite families; to fulfil the country's international obligations and humanitarian tradition with respect to refugees; and to foster a strong, viable economy in all regions of Canada.

Reflecting these objectives, there are three main classes of immigrants under which people are admitted to Canada as permanent residents: Family Class, Refugee Class, and Economic Class.

In 2009, Canada admitted about 252,200 individuals to live as permanent residents; 52% of them were women (Chart 9.2).

221. Caron Malenfant, Eric, André Lebel and Laurent Martel. 2010. *Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 91-551-X. Ottawa, Ontario.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=91-551-XWE&lang=eng> (accessed January 13, 2011).

Chart 9.2**Female permanent residents and total permanent residents, Canada, 1980 to 2009**

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures.

Almost 3 in 10 (29%) immigrant women who were admitted as permanent residents in 2009 were in the Family Class category. Women were more likely to be admitted under the Family Class category and made up 59% of all immigrants admitted from it (Chart 9.3).

Another 39% of women who came that year were admitted as spouses or dependants in the Economic Class and they accounted for 56% of immigrants in that category.

Principle applicants in the Economic Class

Immigrants who come as principal applicants of the Economic Class are selected for their suitability for the Canadian labour force based on an assessment of their skills. There are different programs within Economic Class, including skilled workers, Canadian experience class, entrepreneur, investor, provincial nominee programs and live-in caregiver programs.

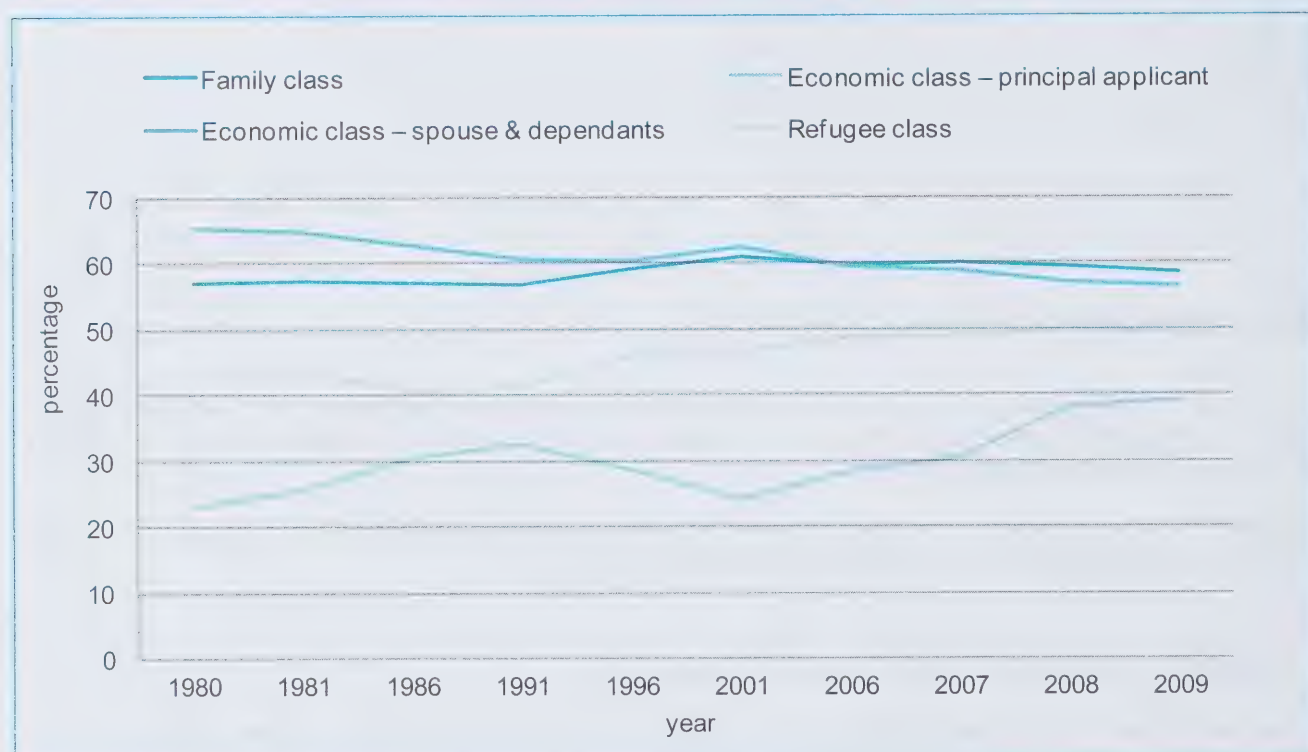
In 2009, 19% of all female immigrants admitted were Economic Class principal applicants, indicating that women were less likely to come as economic principal applicants than as Family Class applicants or the spouse or dependant of an economic applicant. Of all immigrants in this category, 39% were women and 61% were men.

Immigrants who land under the refugee category represent a relatively small proportion of the permanent residents admitted each year. In 2009, 9% (about 22,800 individuals) of landed immigrants admitted that year were refugees. Approximately 49% (11,300 individuals) of all Refugee Class immigrants were women.

In general, there are four subcategories of the refugee class: refugee landed in Canada, government-assisted refugee, privately sponsored refugee and refugee dependants. Among the immigrant women in the Refugee Class, most (33%) landed as government-assisted refugees. Another 30% landed from inside Canada. That is to say, they were refugee claimants who had already lived in Canada before being admitted as permanent residents. Slightly over one-fifth (21%) were privately-sponsored refugees and a few (15%) were refugee dependants.

Chart 9.3

Female permanent residents, by major admission category, Canada, 1980 to 2009



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures.

Immigrant women come from many countries

The 2006 Census estimated that Canada's 3.2 million immigrant women came from over 220 countries. The largest proportion of these immigrant women, 9%, reported the United Kingdom as their place of birth, followed by the People's Republic of China (8%), India (7%) and the Philippines (5%).

Of the total female immigrant population, 18% landed recently between 2001 to 2006, coming mainly from Asia. Among recent immigrant women, the largest share came from the People's Republic of China (15% or 84,700 individuals), followed by India (11% or 65,900 individuals) and the Philippines (8% or 43,700 individuals).

The source of Canada's immigrants has shifted over the years. In 1971, Europe was the birthplace of 61% of recent immigrant women (Chart 9.4); by 2006, recent immigrant women came mainly from Asia and the Middle East (59%).

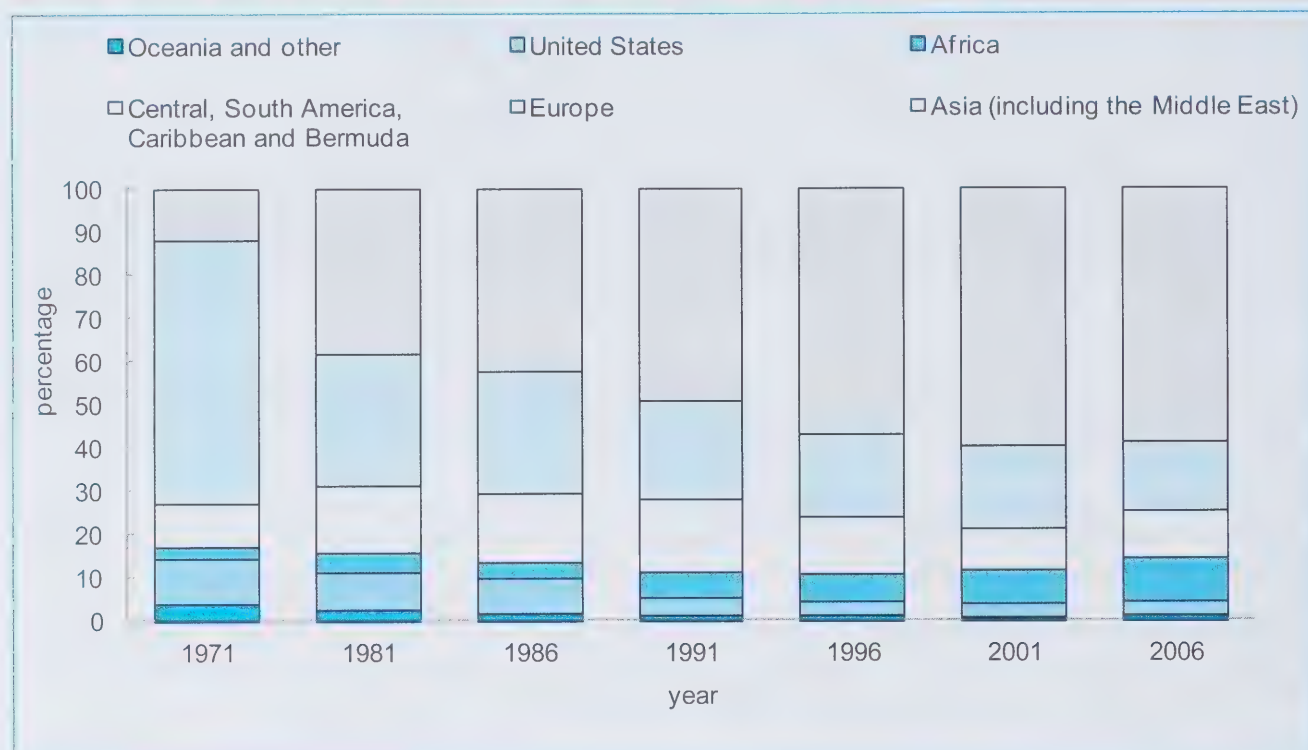
Also in 2006, there was a slight increase in the proportion of recent immigrant women who came from Central and South America and the Caribbean, 11% compared with 9% in 2001. The top three countries of birth of recent immigrant women from these regions were Colombia (2.3% or 13,200 individuals), Mexico (1.5% or 8,900) and Haiti (1.0% or 6,000).

Although relatively small, the proportion of recent immigrant women from Africa also increased slightly in 2006, to 10% compared with 8% in 2001. In comparison, women born in Africa who immigrated to Canada in the later part of the 1960s comprised only 3% of recent immigrants in 1971.

This shift in the source of immigration to Canada since the 1970s was due to a number of factors, such as changes in Canada's immigration programs to build on social, humanitarian and economic goals and international events affecting the movements of migrants and refugees.

Chart 9.4

Recent immigrant women, by region of birth, Canada, 1971 to 2006



Notes: In "Oceania and other" the term "other" includes Greenland, St Pierre and Miquelon, the category "other country", as well as a small number of immigrants born in Canada.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1971 to 2006.

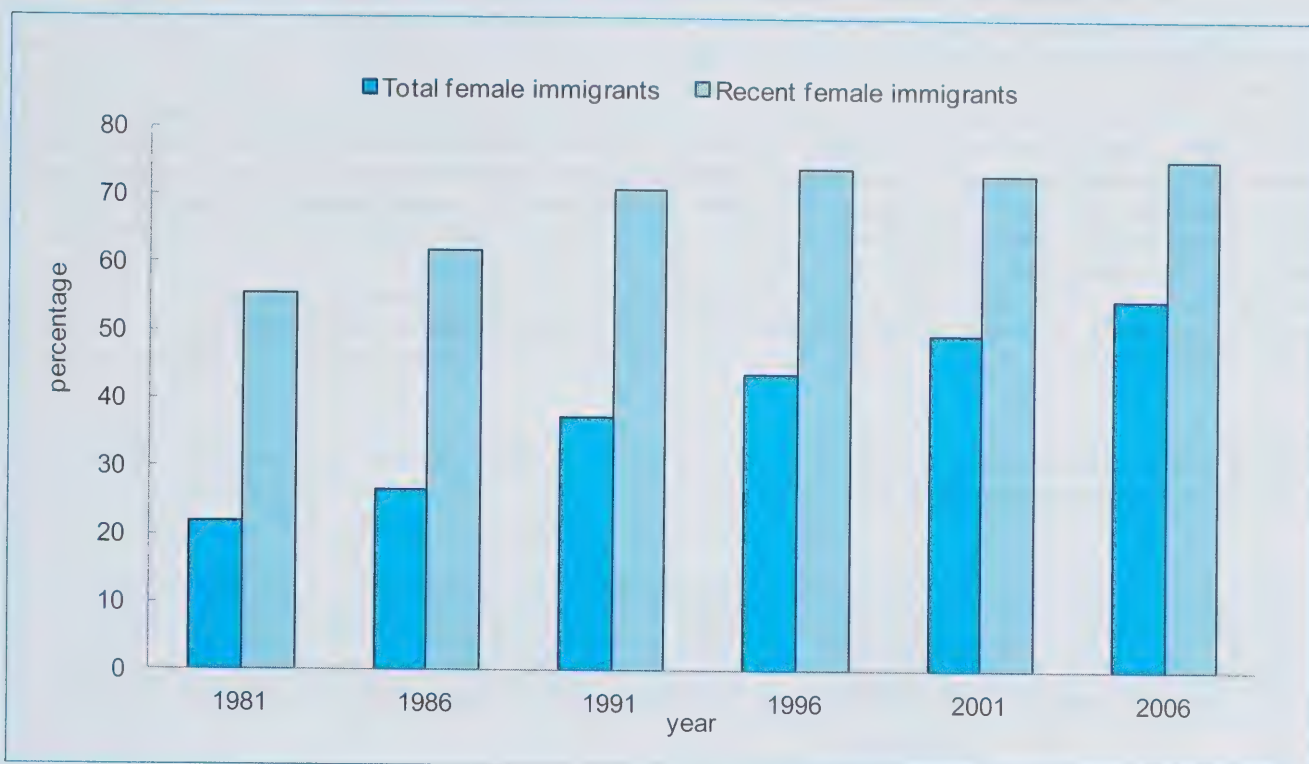
Many recent immigrant women belong to visible minorities

As a result of the shifting sources of recent arrivals to regions other than Europe, an increasing proportion of immigrant women belong to a visible minority. In 1981, 55% of recent immigrant women were members of visible minorities (Chart 9.5); by 2006, that proportion was 76% of all recent immigrant women.

Because the share of visible minorities increased among recent immigrant women, it also increased in the total female immigrant population. In 2006, visible minorities accounted for 55% of the total female immigrant population, up from 22% in 1981. For more information, see the chapter on visible minority women.

Chart 9.5

Percentage of visible minority women in total female immigrant and recent female immigrant populations, Canada, 1981 to 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1981 to 2006.

The largest visible minority group among recent immigrant women in 2006 was South Asian (28%) followed by Chinese (23%) and Black (11%). Similarly, these visible minority groups were also the largest among the total female immigrant population. Chinese accounted for 26% of visible minority immigrant women, followed by South Asians (25%) and Blacks (13%).

In the male immigrant population, South Asian, Chinese and Black were also the three largest visible minority groups.

The majority settle in large population centres

Immigrant women, like immigrant men, tend to settle in Canada's large population centres. In 2006, 90% of immigrant women lived in the country's 33 census metropolitan areas (CMAs). In comparison, 68% of the total female population lived in these areas.

Among Canada's CMAs, Toronto, Vancouver and Montréal were home to the largest share of immigrant women: 63% of all immigrant women and 69% of recent immigrant women resided in these three CMAs in 2006. In comparison, a much smaller proportion of Canada's total female population, 35%, lived in these CMAs.

Among these three CMAs, Toronto was home to 38% of all immigrant women and 41% of recent immigrant women. Montréal and Vancouver had the second and third largest shares of recent immigrant women, at 14% each.

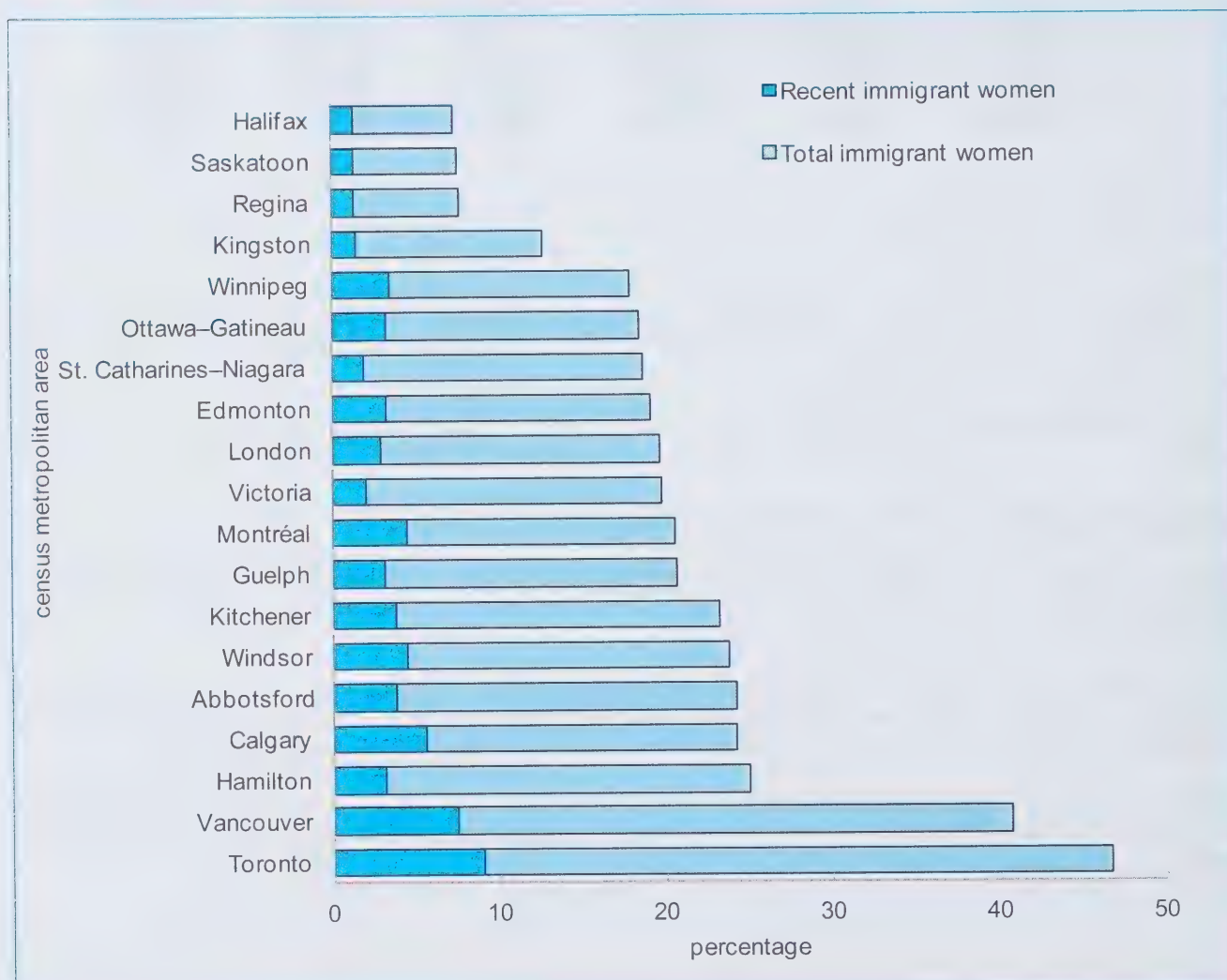
Toronto and Vancouver had notably larger shares of recent immigrants than of their population share in Canada. For example, in 2006, Toronto was home to 16% of the total female population in Canada, but 41% of recent immigrant women. Thus, Toronto's share of the population of recent immigrant women was 2.5 times more than its share of the total female population. This was also the case for Vancouver, where its share of the population of recent immigrant women was 2.1 times its share of the total female population. In comparison, Montréal's share of recent immigrant women was only slightly higher than its share of the total female population, 1.2 times higher in 2006.

While Toronto, Vancouver and Montréal were still the three largest population centres where immigrant women settled, the smaller CMAs such as Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg saw increases in their shares of recent immigrant women. In 2006, 5.2% of recent immigrant women chose to live in Calgary compared with 3.8% in 2001. The shares of recent immigrant women who settled in Edmonton increased from 2.2% in 2001 to 2.9% in 2006 and in Winnipeg from 1.4% to 2.1%.

However, the share of recent immigrant women settling in Ottawa–Gatineau declined, from 3.9% in 2001 to 3.2% in 2006.

Chart 9.6

Immigrant and recent immigrant women as a percentage of total female population, by census metropolitan area, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Almost one-half of Toronto's female population are immigrants

With the tendency of immigrants to settle in major urban centers, their numbers have made a demographic impact in several CMAs. Female immigrants comprised 27% of the female population living in all 33 CMAs in 2006.

The impact of immigration was higher in certain CMAs and in certain municipalities within them. The largest share of Canada's female immigrant population resided in Toronto, where immigrant women accounted for 47% of the female population. Within Toronto, the City of Toronto was home to 54% of immigrant women: Mississauga had 15% and Brampton, 9%. In these three municipalities, immigrant women made up about one-half of the female population: 51% in the City of Toronto, 52% in Mississauga and 49% in Brampton (Table 9.1).

Vancouver CMA also had many women who were born outside of Canada. In 2006, 41% of the female population in Vancouver CMA were immigrants. Among the CMA's municipalities, the City of Vancouver, Surrey, Burnaby and Richmond were home to 74% of the CMA's female immigrant population. Richmond had the highest proportion of immigrant women (58%) in its female population, followed by Burnaby (52%) and the City of Vancouver (47%).

Table 9.1

Immigrant women, by the most populated municipalities in the census metropolitan areas of Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal, Canada, 2006

Municipality	as a % of immigrant women in each CMA	as a % of total female population
	percentage	
Toronto CMA	100.0	46.7
Toronto	54.1	51.3
Mississauga	14.6	52.3
Brampton	8.7	48.7
Markham	6.2	57.0
Vaughan	4.5	45.4
Vancouver CMA	100.0	40.7
Vancouver	31.6	47.4
Surrey	17.8	39.2
Burnaby	12.2	51.9
Richmond	12.0	58.4
Coquitlam	5.3	40.1
Montréal CMA	100.0	20.5
Montréal	66.4	30.5
Laval	9.7	19.6
Longueuil	3.8	12.4
Terrebonne	0.5	3.8
Repentigny	0.4	4.0

Note: CMA stands for census metropolitan area.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

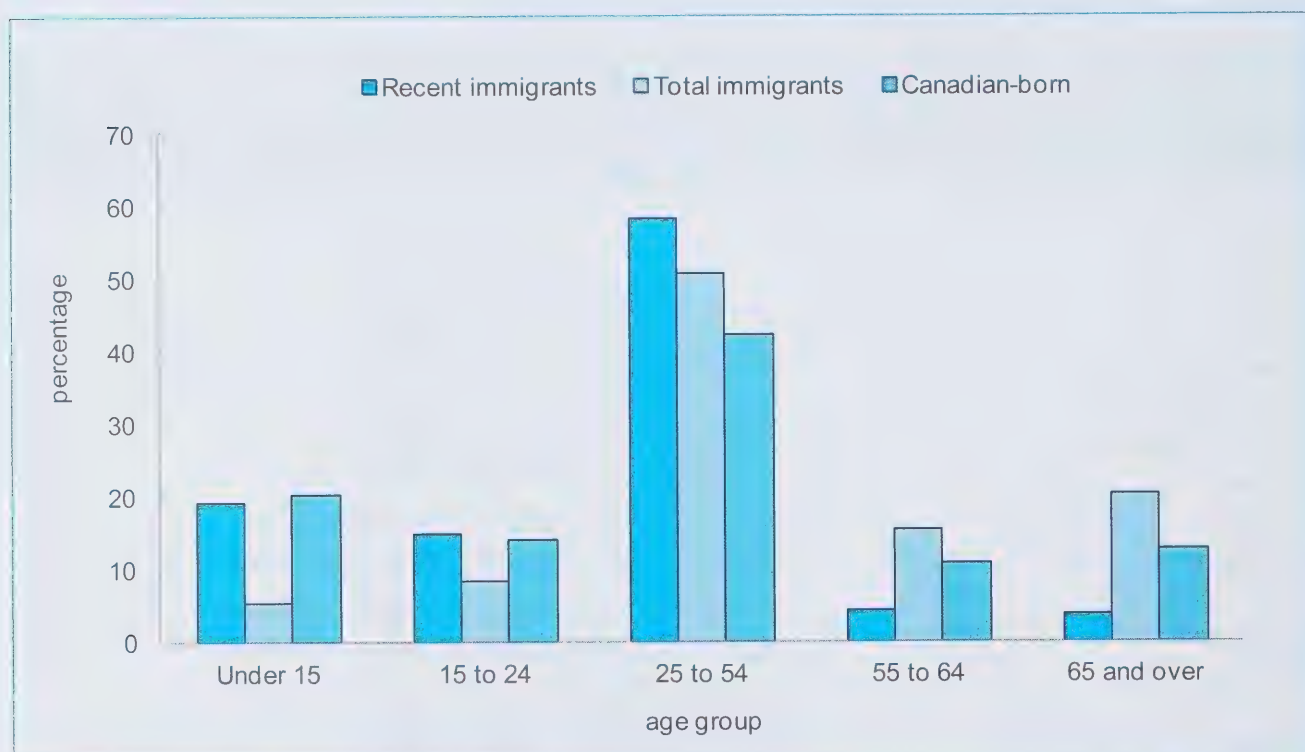
As for Montréal CMA, female immigrants made up 21% of the CMA's female population in 2006, almost the same as the national average of 20%. Like Toronto and Vancouver, the female immigrant population had a bigger impact on certain municipalities than others. Two-thirds (66%) of Montreal CMA's immigrant women lived in the City of Montréal and they accounted for three-tenths (30%) of the city's female population. The city of Laval was home to about 10% of the CMA's immigrant women, who accounted for 20% of Laval's female population.

Recent arrivals are younger, but the overall immigrant population is older

People tend to migrate when they are young. Thus, recent immigrants, both men and women, tend to be in younger age groups. In 2006, almost 58% of recent immigrant women were in the core working age group of 25- to 54-year-olds (Chart 9.7). A smaller proportion, 4.3%, were in the older working age group of 55 to 64 and only 3.6% of recent immigrant women were 65 and over.

In comparison, 42% of Canadian-born women were 25 to 54 and 11% were 55 to 64. Another 13% of Canadian-born women were 65 and over.

Chart 9.7
Recent immigrant women, total immigrants and Canadian-born, by age group, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

As a whole, immigrant women were more likely to be older than Canadian-born women. In 2006, 86% of immigrant women were 25 and over, compared with 66% of Canadian-born women. One-fifth (20%) of immigrant women were 65 and over, compared with 13% of Canadian-born women. Of the immigrant women who were 65 and over in 2006, most (65%) had landed in Canada before 1970.

As for the youngest age group, only 5.3% of female immigrants were under 15 years of age. In contrast, 20% of the Canadian-born women were in this age group.

More immigrant women are married

Immigrant women and men were more likely to be legally married than the Canadian-born in all age groups. In 2006, 60% of all immigrant women and 66% of those who had arrived since 2001 were married, compared with 43% of Canadian-born women (Chart 9.8). As for men, 67% of immigrant men and 45% of Canadian-born men were legally married in 2006.

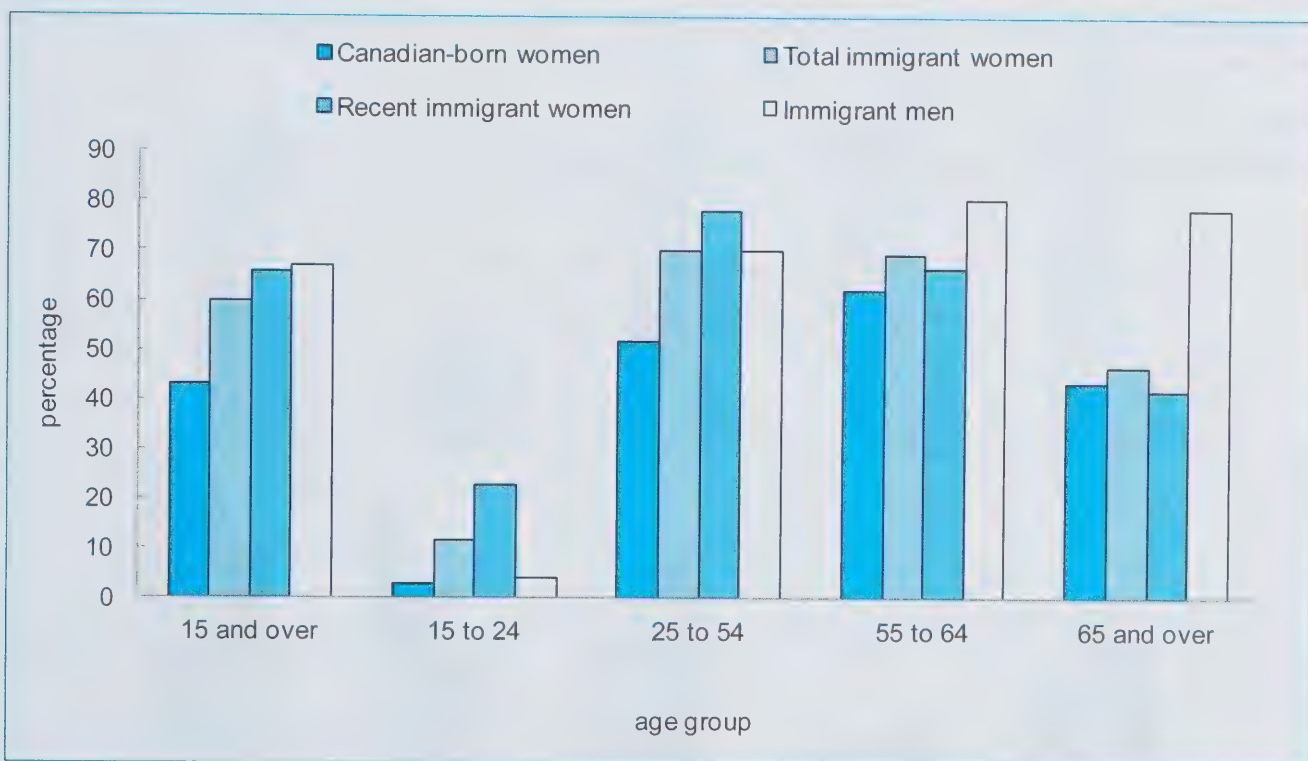
In addition to a higher likelihood of being married, immigrant women were also more likely to be married at younger ages than Canadian-born women. In 2006, 12% of immigrant women aged 15 to 24 were married. In contrast, only 3% of Canadian-born women and 4% of immigrant men in this age group were married.

Among the older age groups, more men than women were married. Of immigrant men aged 55 to 64, 80% were married, compared with 69% of their female counterparts. A smaller gender difference also existed among the Canadian-born of the same age: 62% of women and 68% of men were legally married. For both immigrants and Canadian-born, more women than men in this age group were either divorced or widowed.

Among immigrants aged 65 and over, 78% of men were married compared with 47% of women. Two-fifths (41%) of immigrant women and 48% of recent arrivals of this age groups were widows, compared with one-tenth (10%) of immigrant men.

Chart 9.8

Persons who are married, by immigrant status group and age group, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

The majority live with family members

Most of the Canadian population live in a census family, whether they are immigrants or not. In 2006, 83% of immigrant women aged 15 and over were living in a census family. Conversely, 17% of them did not live with any immediate family member; they lived alone or with relatives or non-relatives.

Of the immigrant women who lived with family members, most of them lived with their spouse (67%) or in a common-law relationship (4%). Another 18% were daughters living with their parents, while 11% were lone parents.

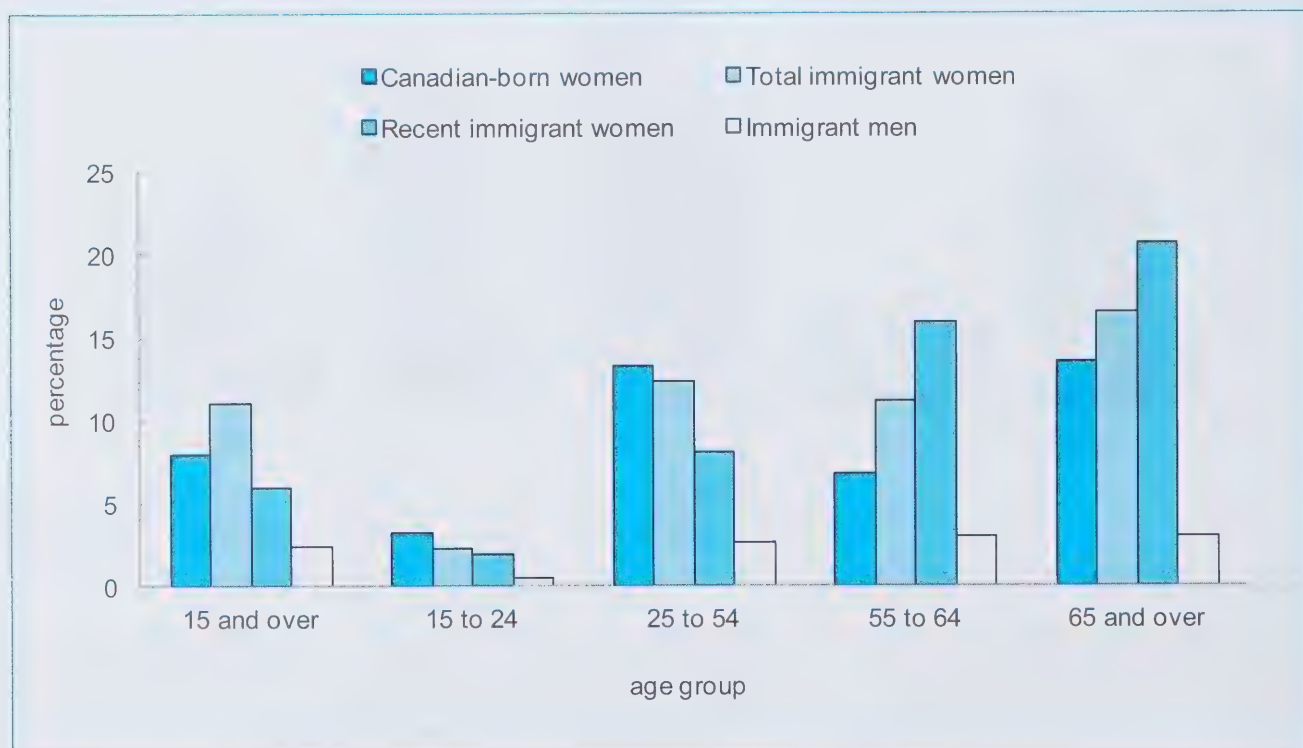
The pattern of family status among immigrant women who lived in a census family was somewhat different than among Canadian-born women. Fewer Canadian-born women than immigrant women lived with a spouse in almost all age groups. The only exception was among women aged 65 and over, when the proportion of those living with a spouse was the same (82%) for both Canadian-born and immigrant women. Of all Canadian-born women aged 15 and over, 41% were living with a spouse.

While immigrant women (11%) were more likely to be lone parents than Canadian-born women (8.0%), this pattern was only true among women aged 55 and over (Chart 9.9). For example, 11% of immigrant women aged 55 to 64 were lone parents, compared with 6.8% of their Canadian-born counterparts. Among women aged 65 and over, 16% of immigrants, compared with 13% of Canadian-born were lone parents. In the younger age group (25 to 54), Canadian-born women were slightly more likely to be lone parents (13%) than immigrant women (12%).

More immigrant women than men were lone parents. In 2006, 11% of immigrant women and 2.4% of immigrant men aged 15 and over were lone parents.

Chart 9.9

Lone-parents by immigration status group and age group, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

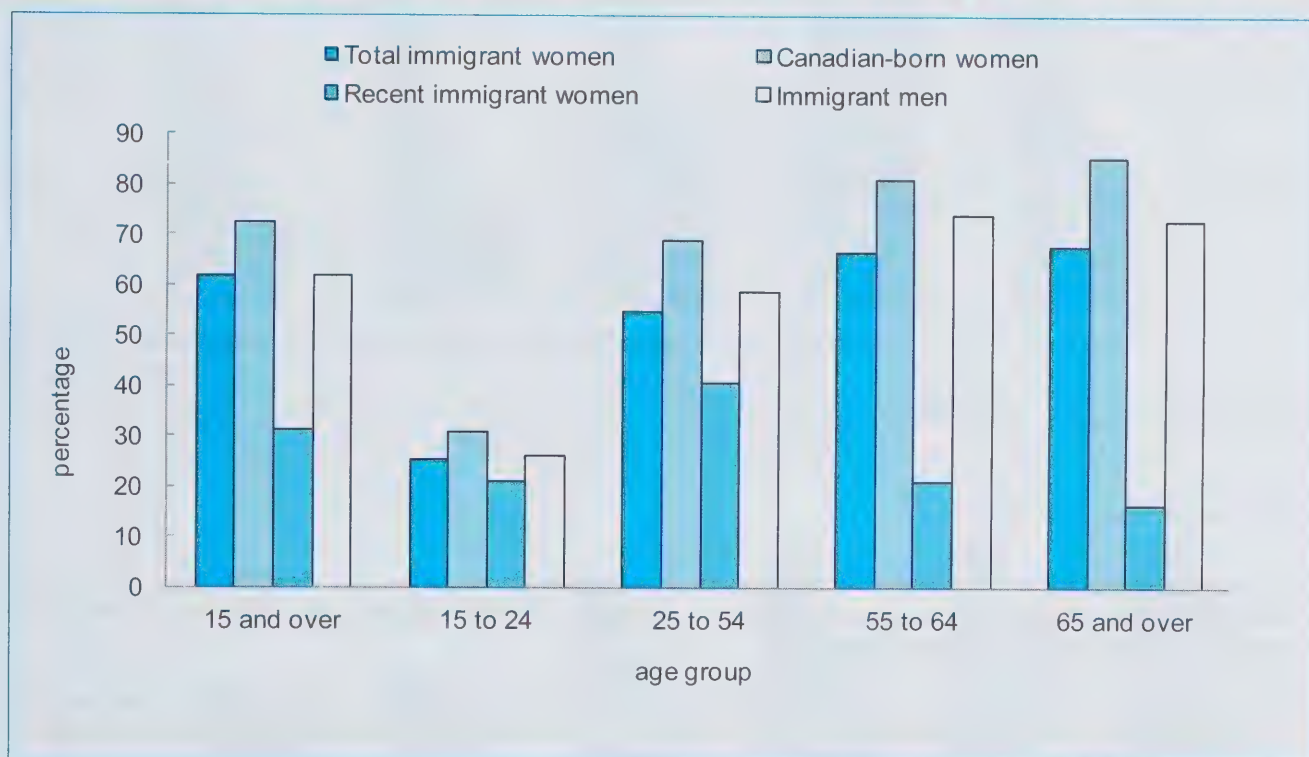
In all age groups, immigrant women were less likely to be in a common-law relationship than Canadian-born women. In 2006, 12% of Canadian-born women aged 15 and over were in a common-law relationship, compared with 4% of immigrant women.

Immigrant women (18%) were less likely to be daughters living in a census family than Canadian-born women (39%). The difference was mainly because of the older age structure of the population of immigrant women, making it less likely that they would live as daughters in a census family. The difference between the proportion of immigrant and Canadian-born women who lived with their parents disappeared when age was taken into account. In 2006, 83% of immigrant women aged 15 to 24 were daughters living in a census family, compared with 82% of their Canadian-born counterparts.

Among the immigrant women aged 15 and over who did not live with an immediate family member, 62% lived alone, 26% lived with relatives and the remaining 12% lived with non-relatives. Fewer immigrant women lived alone (62%) than Canadian-born women (73%). Among recent immigrant women, living alone was the most common situation for 25- to 54-year-olds (41%); for those aged 65 and over, only (17%) lived alone (Chart 9.10).

Chart 9.10

People who are living alone, by immigration status group and age group, Canada, 2006

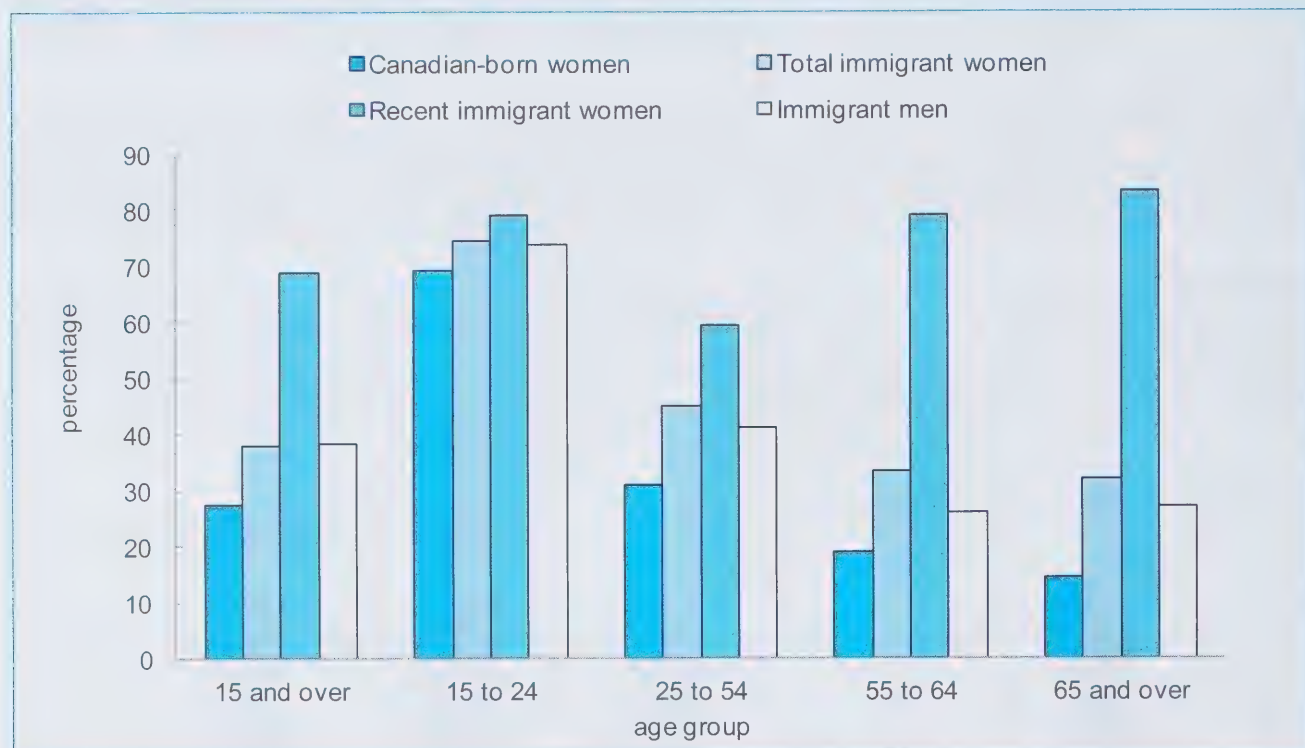


Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Among women not living in a census family, immigrant women (26%) were more likely than Canadian-born women (11%) to live with relatives or non-relatives (Chart 9.11).

Chart 9.11

People not living in a census family who are living with relatives or non-relatives, by immigration status group and age group, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

High naturalization rate

To be eligible for Canadian citizenship, immigrants must meet several requirements. They must generally have at least three years of residency in Canada and have knowledge of an official language. They may be tested on citizenship knowledge and language ability.

Most eligible female immigrants had Canadian citizenship. In 2006, 85% of immigrant women who were eligible for Canadian citizenship had already acquired it. This naturalization rate was about the same as that of immigrant men, 86%.

Most immigrant women who were Canadian citizens reported having only Canadian citizenship (86%). Another 14% reported Canadian citizenship in addition to the citizenship of at least one other country.

The proportion of immigrant women who acquired Canadian citizenship by naturalization increased with years of residency in Canada. In 2006, 90% of immigrant women who had come to Canada before 1990 had already become Canadian citizens. The naturalization rate was slightly lower, 84%, among women who immigrated during the 1990s. Forty-eight percent of recent immigrants who were eligible for Canadian citizenship became citizens by 2006.

Linguistic diversity

Immigration has played a significant role in shaping Canada's linguistic diversity. Among the female immigrant population in 2006, nearly 150 languages were reported as a mother tongue (the first language a person learned at home as a child and still understood at the time of the census). For 70% of immigrant women, these mother tongues were not official languages, that is, they were neither English nor French (Chart 9.12). This linguistic diversity was due to the changing source regions from which immigrant women came to Canada in recent decades. In 1981, 52% of immigrant women had a mother tongue other than English or French. The proportion increased throughout the years to 59% in 1991 and 67% in 2001.

Conversely, the proportion of immigrant women reporting English or French, with or without a non-official language, declined from 48% in 1981 to 30% by 2006.

In 2006, among the immigrant women who had a mother tongue other than English or French, the largest proportion reported Chinese languages—including dialects such as Mandarin, Cantonese and Hakka—(19%), followed by Italian (6.3%), Spanish (5.9%) and Punjabi (5.7%).

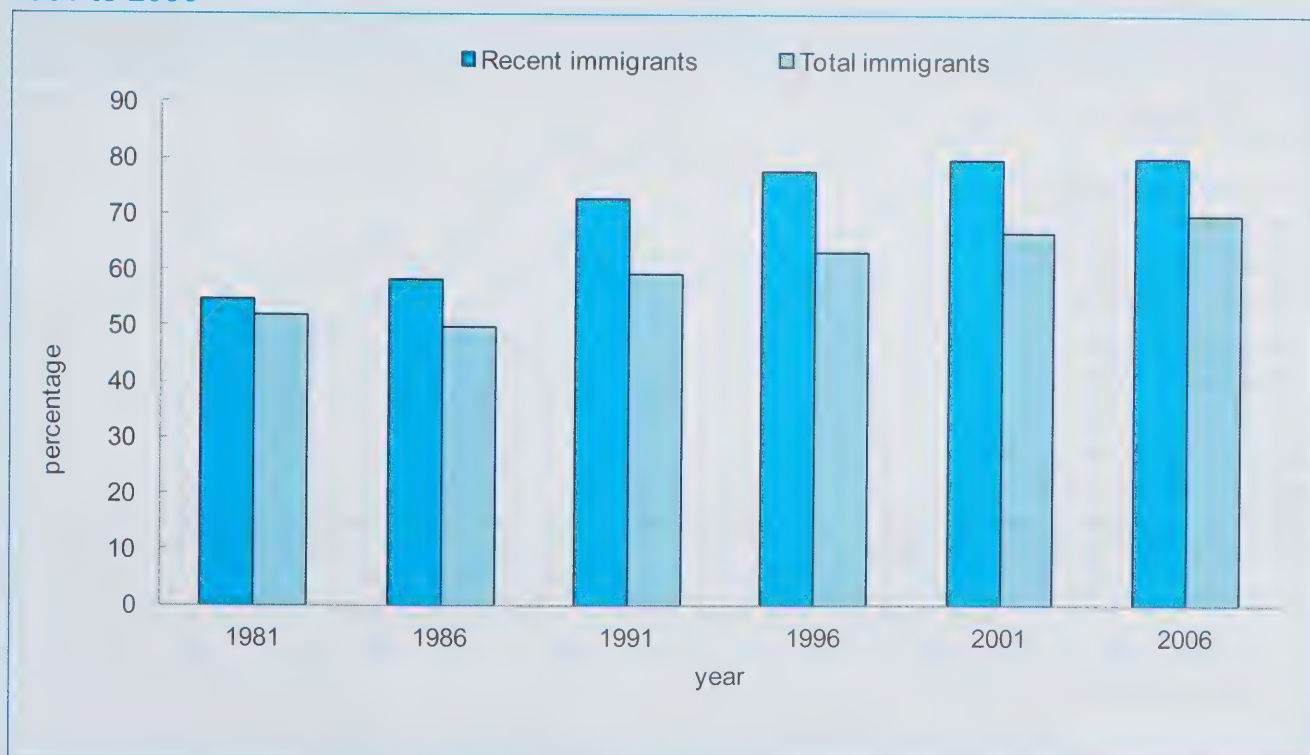
Among the 30% of immigrant women who had at least one official language as their mother tongue, 82% reported English alone, 10% French alone and 8% reported multiple mother tongues with at least one official language.

Among the immigrant women who reported English alone as their mother tongue, 59% arrived before 1980. For those who had French alone as their mother tongue, 38% arrived before 1980.

The proportion of women who had a mother tongue other than English or French was higher among recent immigrants and increased over time. In 1981, 55% of recent immigrant women reported a non-official language as mother tongue, a share that rose to four in five (80%) in both 2001 and 2006.

Chart 9.12

Immigrant women whose mother tongue is neither English nor French, Canada, 1981 to 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1981 to 2006.

Use of official languages increases with time lived in Canada

Not surprisingly, immigrants' use of official languages increased the longer they resided in Canada. While 30% of immigrant women reported English or French as their mother tongue, 57% reported using English or French most often at home. Immigrant women who had arrived before 1991 were most likely to use English or French at home (69%) because they had resided longer in Canada.

As well, even though many had neither English nor French as a mother tongue, 92% of immigrant women reported that they could converse in at least one official language. This was also the case for recent arrivals: 89% of them reported knowledge of either or both official languages.

Conversely, 7.9% of all immigrant women and 11% of recent immigrant women said they did not know English or French. Nevertheless, the need for official language training among immigrants is higher for women than men. In 2006, 4.8% of all immigrant men and 7.5% of recent immigrant men were unable to converse in English or French.

Higher educational attainment

Immigrant women were more likely to have completed university than women born in Canada. In 2006, 23% of immigrant women aged 15 and over had a university degree or certificate at the bachelor's level or above, compared with 16% of their Canadian-born counterparts. The higher educational attainment among the immigrant female population was even more evident for those in the core working-age group, aged 25 to 54. One-third (33%) of immigrant women in this age group had a university degree, compared with less than one-quarter (23%) of their Canadian-born counterparts (Table 9.2).

Table 9.2
Level of education from age 25 to 54, by immigration status, Canada, 2006

Level of education	Females			Males		
	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants level of education	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants
No certificate, diploma or degree	12	12	9	16	11	7
High school certificate or equivalent	25	22	16	24	20	13
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	10	7	5	17	10	5
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	26	18	12	20	16	10
University certificate or diploma below the bachelor level	4	8	10	3	7	8
University certificate or degree	23	33	49	19	36	57

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

The higher level of educational attainment among immigrant women was partly because of Canada's immigration policy, which tends to emphasize educational and occupational qualifications in selecting immigrants. In 2006, 49% of recent immigrant women aged 25 to 54 reported having a university degree or certificate at the bachelor's level or above.

At the same time, immigrants who arrived at young ages had a high propensity of attaining a university education.²²² This is because their immigrant parents tended to be highly educated and parents' educational aspirations strongly influence the likelihood that their children will obtain higher education.²²³

Recent immigrant women were less likely to have a university degree than recent immigrant men. Of recent immigrant men in the core working-age group, 57% had a university degree, 8 percentage points higher than recent immigrant women in the same age group. Recent immigrant men were also more likely than recent immigrant women to hold a university degree above the bachelor level, (at the master's or doctoral level). Among recent immigrant men aged 25 to 54, 28% had a degree above the bachelor level, compared with 21% of recent immigrant women in the same age group.

Of immigrant women who had a degree, 62% earned it from an educational institution outside Canada. The proportion was even higher among recent arrivals, of whom 90% had obtained their university education outside Canada. The People's Republic of China (15%), India (14%), the Philippines (11%), Pakistan (5.2%) and the United States of America (4.8%) were the most common countries where recent immigrant women obtained their university education. The high proportion of immigrants who had been trained outside Canada (especially in countries with a somewhat different education system than Canada's) had a direct impact on the economic and labour market integration of immigrants.²²⁴

The transferability of international credentials among immigrants has been one of the priorities in many public policy discussions in recent decades. Immigrants who received their training in regions other than Europe, Australia and North America generally had lower education–job match rates.²²⁵ Furthermore, the education–job match rate of internationally trained immigrant women was lower than that of their male counterparts.

School attendance higher for recent immigrant women

Fewer immigrant women aged 15 and over (15%) than Canadian-born women (19%) were attending school full-time or part-time during the nine month period before Census Day (May 16, 2006). However, this was likely because of the different age structures of the immigrant and Canadian-born female populations. Among women aged 15 to 24, a higher proportion of immigrant women (72%) were attending school than Canadian-born women (68%). This was also the case for women aged 25 to 44: 18% of those who were immigrants were attending school, compared with 14% of those who were born in Canada.

222. Bonikowska, Aneta and Feng Hou. 2011. *Reversal of Fortunes or Continued Success? Cohort Differences in Education and Earnings of Childhood Immigrants*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11F0019M2011330. Ottawa, Ontario. Analytical Studies Research Paper Series, no. 334. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=11F0019MWE&lang=eng> (accessed January 25, 2011).

223. Finnie, Ross, Eric Lascelles and Arthur Sweetman. 2005. *Who Goes? The Direct and Indirect Effects of Family Background on Access to Post-secondary Education*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11F0019MIE2005237. Ottawa, Ontario. Analytical Studies Research Paper Series, no. 237. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=11F0019MIE&lang=eng> (accessed March 12, 2011).

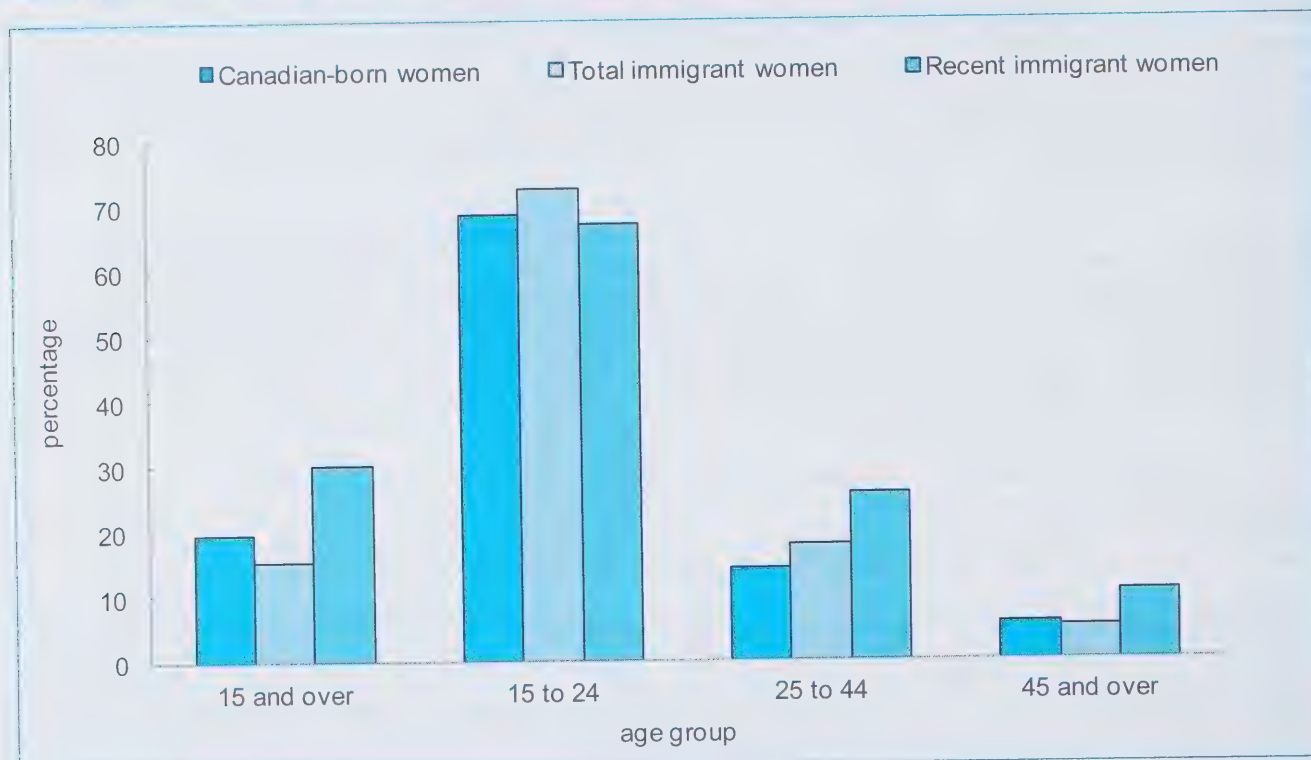
224. Gilmore, Jason. 2008. *The Canadian Immigrant Labour Market in 2006: Analysis by Region or Country of Birth*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 71-606-XWE2008002. Ottawa, Ontario. The Immigrant Labour Force Analysis Series, no. 2. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=71-606-XWE&lang=eng> (accessed January 13, 2011).

225. Plante, Johanne. 2010. *Characteristics and Labour Market Outcomes of Internationally-educated Immigrants*. No. 84. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 81-595-M. Ottawa, Ontario. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=81-595-MWE&lang=eng> (accessed January 28, 2011).

For some newcomers, taking further education or training could help get their international credentials transferred and facilitate their integration in Canada. The school attendance rate, full-time and part-time, was notably higher among recent immigrant women and men aged 15 and over. The school attendance rate of recent immigrant women, 30%, was double that of the total immigrant female population, 15%, and was 11 percentage points higher than that of Canadian-born women (Chart 9.13).

Chart 9.13

School attendance of women, by immigrant status and age group, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Similar major fields of study as Canadian-born women

Immigrant women and Canadian-born women chose similar fields of study for their postsecondary education. In 2006, the highest proportion of women, regardless of immigrant status, was in business, management and public administration—27% of immigrant women reported this as their major field of study (Table 9.3). The other top major fields of study reported by immigrant and Canadian-born women were health, parks recreation and fitness; social and behavioural sciences and law; education and the humanities. These four fields were reported by 48% of all immigrant women aged 15 and over with a postsecondary education. As for Canadian-born women, 53% reported these four fields as their major area of study.

The education profile of recent immigrant women was also similar to the profiles of all immigrant women and of Canadian-born women. The only exception was that recent immigrant women were more likely to study in architecture, engineering and related technologies (11%) as well as humanities (10%).

Table 9.3

Population aged 15 and over with a postsecondary certificate or diploma, by major field of study, Canada, 2006

Major field of study	Canadian-born		Total immigrants		Recent immigrants	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
	percentage					
Population with a postsecondary certificate	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Education	12.3	4.3	8.7	2.6	7.3	1.7
Visual and performing arts and communications technologies	3.9	3.6	3.9	3.0	3.6	2.3
Humanities	6.1	4.5	8.0	4.2	9.7	4.1
Social and behavioural sciences and law	12.5	7.0	12.7	6.8	12.4	7.1
Business, management and public administration	27.3	15.7	26.6	15.9	24.9	18.0
Physical and life sciences and technologies	2.6	3.3	4.5	5.0	6.1	6.1
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	2.8	4.7	5.0	7.1	6.3	9.9
Architecture, engineering and related technologies	2.5	41.6	6.0	43.7	10.6	40.1
Agriculture, Natural resources and conservation	1.4	3.5	1.2	2.3	1.5	2.4
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	22.2	4.8	18.9	5.6	15.1	6.0
Personal, protective and transportation services	6.4	6.9	4.4	3.9	2.4	2.3
Other fields of study	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

However, the education profile of immigrant women differed from that of immigrant men, with the men concentrated in just two areas of study. Among immigrant men aged 15 and over with a postsecondary education, 44% reported architecture, engineering and related technologies as their major field of study, followed by business, management and public administration, at 16%.

Immigrant women in the labour force

In 2006, more immigrant women (95%) than Canadian-born women (80%) were of working age (aged 15 and over). Of the women in this age group, roughly 1.7 million immigrants, or 55.8%, were in the labour force in 2006. They accounted for 21.0% of Canada's total female labour force in that year, which stood at 8.1 million.

From 2001 to 2006, Canada's total female labour force population increased by 9.5%. The rate of increase for immigrant women, however, was more than double that for Canadian-born women. During this five-year period, the female labour force increased 16.8% among the immigrant population and 7.4% among the Canadian-born.

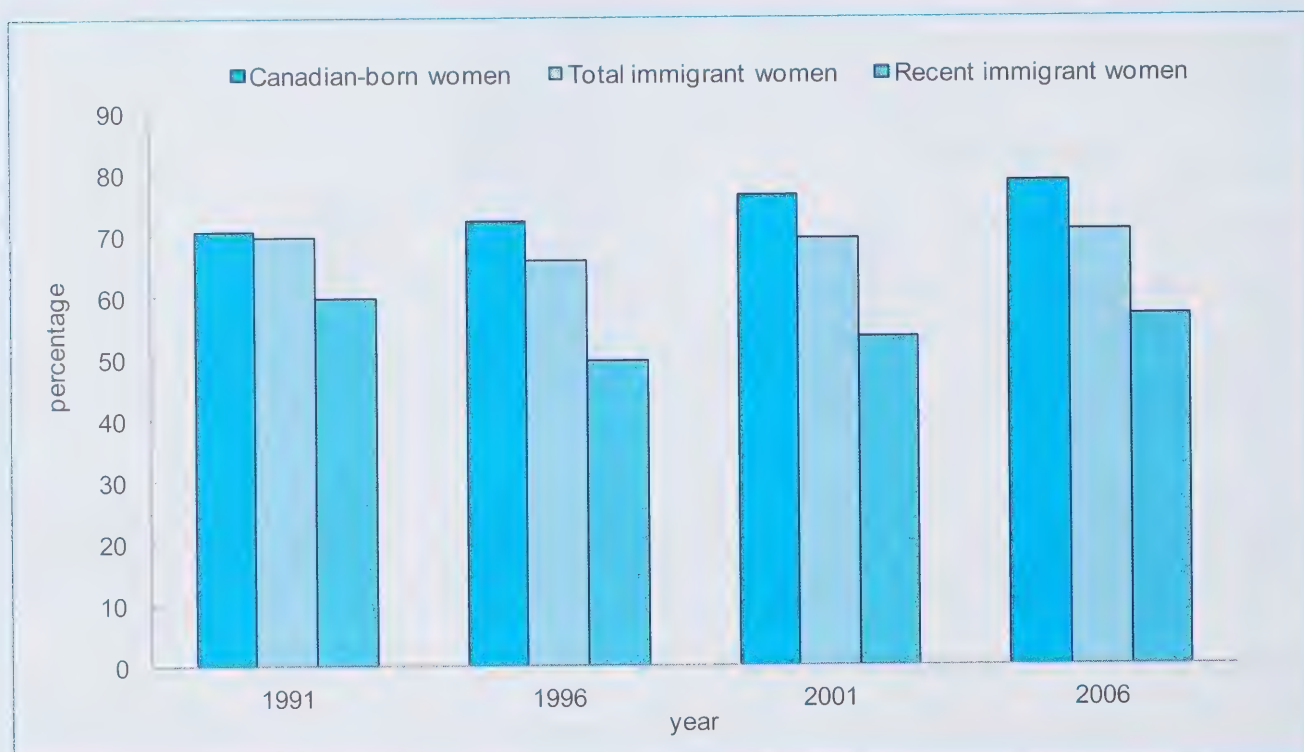
Employment rate increased from 2001 to 2006 but still lower than for Canadian-born women

The employment rate for immigrant women aged 15 and over increased to 51.5% in 2006 from 50.0% in 2001. However, the rate was still lower than that of Canadian-born women, who also experienced a slight employment rate increase from 57.9% to 59.5%.

Among the female immigrant population, recent arrivals were the least likely to be employed. In 2006, 56.8% of recent immigrant women aged 25 to 54 were employed (Chart 9.14). In comparison, the employment rate for the total immigrant women population in that age group was 70.5% and for their Canadian-born counterparts, 78.5%. Nevertheless, recent immigrant women experienced a slightly better employment situation in 2006 than in 2001, when their employment rate was 53.2%.

Chart 9.14

Employment rates of women aged 25 to 54, by immigration status, Canada, 1991 to 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1991 to 2006.

Employment rates increased with longer residence in Canada. In 2006, the employment rate among core working age immigrant women who had arrived in the 1990s was 69.5%, and for those who had arrived before 1991, it was 77.3% (Table 9.4).²²⁶

As with Canadian-born women, immigrant women had a lower employment rate than their male counterparts. In 2006, 85.3% of core working age immigrant men were employed, as were 78.6% of those who had recently immigrated.

Table 9.4

Employment rates from age 25 to 54, by immigration status and period of immigration, Canada, 2006

Immigration status	Females	Males
	percentage	
Canadian-born	78	86
Total immigrants	70	85
Immigrant arrived		
2001 to 2006	57	79
1991 to 2000	70	86
Before 1991	77	88

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

In 2006, the unemployment rate for immigrant women aged 15 and over was 7.8%, compared with 6.2% of their Canadian-born counterparts. However, unemployment was highest among recent arrivals at 14.7%. Among women of core working age, there was also a gap of 2.6 percentage points between the unemployment rate of immigrant women (7.6%) and those born in Canada (5.0%).

Higher employment rate among older immigrant workers

Among older immigrant workers aged 55 to 64, the employment rates of women and men were both higher than for their Canadian-born counterparts. In 2006, the employment rate for immigrant women in this age group was 50.4%, 2 percentage points higher than for Canadian-born women (48.4%) (Table 9.5). For men in this age group, the employment gap between immigrants (70.2%) and men born in Canada (62.5%) was even wider, an almost 8 percentage point difference.

However, the employment rate of recent immigrants in the older age group was notably low. These were individuals who had arrived in Canada since 2001 and were aged about 50 and over when they came: Immigrants who came to Canada at older working age they could face bigger challenges integrating into the labour market. In 2006, recent immigrant women aged 55 to 64 had an employment rate of 29.9%; the rate of their male counterparts was 55.9%.

226. Xue, Li. 2010. "A Comprehensive Look at the Employment Experience of Recent Immigrants." *Canadian Immigration: Economic Evidence for a Dynamic Policy Environment*. T. McDonald, E. Ruddick, A. Sweetman and C. Worswick (eds.). Montréal and Kingston. Queen's Policy Studies Series, McGill-Queen's University Press; Zietsma, Danielle. 2007. *The Canadian Immigrant Labour Market in 2006: First Results from Canada's Labour Force Survey*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 71-606-XWE. Ottawa, Ontario. The Immigrant Labour Force Analysis Series, no. 1. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/71-606-x/71-606-x2009001-eng.htm> (accessed April 12, 2011).

Table 9.5
Employment rates, by immigration status and age group, Canada, 2006

Age group	Canadian-born		Total immigrants		Recent immigrants	
	Female	Male	Female percentage	Male	Female	Male
Age 15 and over	59.5	68.5	51.5	65.0	50.4	68.4
15 to 24	59.4	58.5	49.0	49.9	41.0	44.3
25 to 54	78.5	86.3	70.5	85.3	56.8	78.6
55 to 64	48.4	62.5	50.4	70.2	29.9	55.9
65 and over	6.3	15.8	6.1	14.7	10.6	19.4

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Most are wage earners; a higher proportion work part time

Of the immigrant women in the labour force (aged 15 and over), 89% were employed and earning a wage. A much smaller proportion, 10%, were self-employed; the remaining 1% were unpaid family workers (such as in a family business). This breakdown was similar for those of core working age: 90% of immigrant women aged 25 to 54 were wage-earners in 2006, another 10% were self-employed and less than 1% were unpaid family workers.

Immigrant women were slightly more likely to be self-employed than Canadian-born women. In 2006, 10% of immigrant women were self-employed, a percentage almost 2 points higher than for Canadian-born women, at 8.2%. However, immigrant women had a lower self-employment rate (10%) than immigrant men (18%).

In general, women, whether immigrant or Canadian-born, were more likely than men to work part time. As well, immigrant women were more likely than Canadian-born women to work part time. In 2006, 49% of immigrant women aged 25 to 54 worked part-time, compared with 43% of their Canadian-born counterparts and 36% of immigrant men. The proportion of part-time work among recent immigrant women was even higher, at 64%.

In traditional female jobs

Whether they were immigrants or Canadian-born, women continued to work in traditional female occupations. Women were most commonly employed in the sales and services area and in the business, finance and administrative field. Of the immigrant female labour force 15 and over, 29% worked in sales and services and 25% were employed in business, finance and administrative occupations.

Among women of core working age (25 to 54), instead of sales and services, occupations related to business, finance and administration came first, reported by 26% of immigrant and 30% of Canadian-born women (Table 9.6). Sales and services was the second-most common occupational group among immigrant women (26%) and Canadian-born women (23%). As well, immigrant women were commonly employed in health (10%) and social science, education, government service and religion (10%). These two areas were also among the top occupational groups for Canadian-born women.

Immigrant women (9.2%) were more likely than Canadian-born women (3.2%) to work in occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities.

Table 9.6

Labour force aged 25 to 54, by major occupational group and immigration status, Canada, 2006

Occupational group	Canadian-born		Total immigrants		Recent immigrants	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
	percentage					
All occupational groups	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Management	8.9	13.2	8.0	12.6	5.8	9.5
Business, finance and administrative	29.8	9.7	26.0	10.5	22.6	11.1
Natural and applied sciences	3.2	10.3	5.3	15.4	6.6	18.7
Health	10.9	2.1	9.9	2.9	8.8	2.8
Social science, education, government service and religion	14.5	5.4	9.9	4.6	10.1	5.7
Art, culture, recreation and sport	3.4	2.6	2.7	2.1	3.0	2.0
Sales and service	22.3	14.9	25.6	16.7	30.0	17.9
Trades, transport and equipment operators	2.3	29.1	2.2	23.2	2.1	18.8
Occupations unique to primary industry	1.5	5.4	1.1	1.8	1.1	1.7
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	3.2	7.4	9.2	10.2	10.0	11.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Among immigrants, men worked in a wider range of occupational groups than women: 23% of immigrant men reported working in trades, transport and equipment operator and related occupations. Another 17% worked in sales and services, 15% in natural and applied sciences and related occupations, 13% in management, 10% in business, finance and administration, 10% in occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities.

Challenges in labour market integration

Finding employment can be a challenge for many newcomers, particularly employment that reflects their training. This is the case even for newcomers who immigrated with higher educational attainment.²²⁷

According to the results of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC), the number of immigrant women who reported difficulties related to settlement declined over a period of four years after arriving in Canada. However, of those who still experienced difficulties by the fourth year, the largest proportion (32%) reported that finding an adequate job was the greatest challenge they had to face.

Among recent immigrant women of core working age who had a job in 2005, the 2006 Census estimated that 30% worked in sales and service occupations, a higher proportion than for Canadian-born women (22%) by about 8 percentage points (Table 9.6). Although recent immigrant women who had a university degree were somewhat less likely to work in sales and services (23%), the proportion that did so was still three times higher than that for their Canadian-born counterparts (7.4%).

Another 5.8% of recent immigrant women with a university degree reported working in occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities. In contrast, 0.4% of Canadian-born women holding a university degree worked in these occupations.

227. Galarneau, Diane and René Morissette. 2008. "Immigrants education and required job skills." *Perspectives on Labour and Income*. Vol. 9, no. 12. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-001-X. p. 5–18.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=75-001-X200811210766&lang=eng> (accessed January 13, 2011).

A higher proportion of Canadian-born women who were university-educated were employed in management occupations (11%) than their recent immigrant counterparts (6.4%).

According to the results from the LSIC, the greatest challenge among newcomers having difficulties finding employment was to get their non-Canadian qualifications and job experience accepted in Canada. In 2005, an estimated 15,400 immigrant women aged 25 to 44 who had arrived in 2001 reported problems with finding employment. The largest proportion, 37%, reported that their problems were related to transferring foreign qualifications or job experience or to their lack of enough Canadian job experience. An even higher proportion of immigrant men of the same age group reported the same challenges (41%). However, 19% of immigrant women aged 25 to 44 who landed in 2001 reported language problems as their greatest barrier in finding a job, compared with 13% of their male counterparts.

Labour market experience since 2006

Labour Force Survey²²⁸ data collected from 2006 to 2010 shows that immigrant women, especially those who arrived recently, had a higher unemployment rate and a lower employment rate than both immigrant men and Canadian-born women. Recent immigrant women were the most likely to be unemployed and the least likely to be employed when compared with women who had been landed immigrants for a longer period. Among immigrant women aged 25 to 54, the employment rate improved the longer they resided in Canada.

Other research suggests that an important factor of immigrants' economic integration is the timing of their entry into the labour market.²²⁹ Immigrants who arrive during an economic downturn would have additional challenges in finding employment.

Data from the Labour Force Survey captured the employment situation of the Canadian labour force during the 2008-2009 recession, which seems to have affected men more than women. During these two years, both Canadian-born and immigrant women had relatively fewer fluctuations in their employment rates than men. From 2008 to 2009, the employment rates for Canadian-born and immigrant women aged 25 to 54 dropped at about the same magnitude, 1.0 and 0.9 percentage points, respectively. In comparison, employment rates for immigrant men dropped by 4.4 percentage points and for Canadian-born men, by 2.9 percentage points. During that same period, the unemployment rate for immigrant women increased by 2 percentage points, and for immigrant men, it increased by 3.5 percentage points.

By 2010, the employment rate for Canadian-born women of core working age returned to about the same level as in 2007, the year before the economic downturn. However, the employment rate for immigrant women had not returned to the same level as it was in 2007.

228. Since January 2006, additional questions have been added to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) to identify immigrants and to determine the year and month when immigrants landed in Canada, the country in which they were born and the country in which they received their highest level of education. The information from the LFS is to provide more up-to-date labour market characteristics for the immigrant population in Canada. However, the estimates derived from the LFS were somewhat different from those of the census. When developing the immigrant questions for the LFS, care was taken to ensure that immigrant concepts and variables arising from the questions would be comparable with those of the census. However, since the LFS is a sample survey, the estimates are subject to more sampling variability than the census, and could therefore differ from those derived by the census. That said, the labour market experience of immigrant women as estimated by the LFS resembled that estimated by the census.

229. Aydemir, A. 2003. *Effects of Business Cycles on the Labour Market Assimilation of Immigrants*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11F0019MIE2003203. Ottawa, Ontario. Analytical Studies Research Paper Series, no. 203 <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=11F0019MIE&lang=eng> (accessed March 12, 2011).

Employment income is the major income source

There are generally two components in an individual's total income: market income, such as employment earnings and investment income, and government transfers, such as Employment Insurance and the Canada or Quebec Pension Plan.

Among all immigrant women aged 15 and over who had income during 2005, 67% of their income came from employment (wages and salaries and self-employment). The share of income from employment was even higher among recent immigrant women, at 73%. In comparison, 72% of the income for their Canadian-born counterparts was from employment.

The share of total income from employment was larger in the core working-age group (25 to 54). For immigrant women in this age group, 84% of their income came from employment, and for Canadian-born women, the share was 87% (Table 9.7).

In general, immigrant women earned less than their Canadian-born counterparts. Immigrant women of core working age who worked full time, full year in 2005 had a median employment income of \$35,000, about \$3,000 less than Canadian-born women (\$38,000). For recent immigrant women, the full-time, full-year median employment income in this age group was \$26,700.

As was the case for Canadian-born women and men, there was a gender gap in earnings between immigrant women and men. Immigrant women earned less than their male counterparts. At \$35,000, immigrant women of core working age earned 78% of the median employment income of immigrant men of the same age group (\$44,800).

Sources of government transfers vary by age group

Immigrant women generally received 19% of their total income from government transfer payments, such as Old Age Security pensions, Canada or Quebec Pension Plan, child benefits and Employment Insurance. In comparison, Canadian-born women received about 15% of their total income from transfer payments.

The share of total income that consisted of government transfers varied by age, regardless of immigrant status. When they were 65 and over, immigrant and Canadian-born women received 51% and 50% of their total income from government transfers, respectively. The largest share of their government transfers was from Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement. For example, senior immigrant women received 30% of their total income from Old Age Security or Guaranteed Income Supplement and another 18% from Canada or Quebec Pension Plan (Table 9.7).

Younger women had a much smaller share of total income from government transfer payments and different sources of government transfers than senior women. About 11% of the total income of immigrant women aged 15 to 24 were from government transfers such as child benefits, Employment Insurance and others like social assistance.

As for immigrant women of core working age, 11% of their total income came from government transfers. The two most common sources of government transfers for this group of immigrant women, as for their Canadian-born counterparts, were child benefits (6.3%) and Employment Insurance (2.3%). In comparison, Canadian-born women of core working age received 4.0% of their total income from child benefits and 2.4% from Employment Insurance.

Table 9.7

Composition of total income for women aged 15 and over with income in 2005, by immigration status and age group, Canada

Composition of total income	15 to 24 years			25 to 54 years		
	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants percentage	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Market income	90.0	89.2	84.3	91.0	88.9	80.0
Employment income	83.9	81.7	77.3	86.7	84.1	75.3
Wages and salaries	82.6	79.7	74.9	82.0	79.0	71.5
Self-employment income	1.4	2.0	2.4	4.7	5.1	3.8
Investment income	2.2	2.3	1.5	2.2	2.7	2.1
Retirement pensions	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1
Other money income	3.8	5.1	5.3	1.7	1.8	2.5
Government transfer payments	10.0	10.8	15.7	9.0	11.1	20.0
Old Age Security pensions and Guaranteed Income Supplement	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Canada/Quebec Pension Plan benefits	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.4	0.1
Child benefits	2.6	3.1	5.5	4.0	6.3	12.5
Employment Insurance benefits	2.0	1.8	2.9	2.4	2.3	3.7
Other income from government sources	5.0	5.6	7.0	2.0	2.2	3.6
Composition of total income	55 to 64 years			65 years and over		
	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants percentage	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Market income	89.1	90.3	84.3	49.9	49.1	71.6
Employment income	64.4	70.6	60.4	6.5	8.8	18.3
Wages and salaries	60.1	65.0	56.6	5.6	7.5	15.8
Self-employment income	4.3	5.6	3.9	0.9	1.3	2.5
Investment income	7.0	8.3	7.4	12.8	14.4	22.4
Retirement pensions	13.8	8.0	7.6	28.2	23.5	23.1
Other money income	3.9	3.4	8.9	2.3	2.4	7.9
Government transfer payments	10.9	9.7	15.7	50.1	50.9	28.4
Old Age Security pensions and Guaranteed Income Supplement	0.7	1.0	0.6	28.1	29.7	10.5
Canada/Quebec Pension Plan benefits	6.2	4.5	3.3	19.5	17.5	6.3
Child benefits	0.2	0.4	2.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
Employment Insurance benefits	1.0	1.0	2.1	0.1	0.2	0.5
Other income from government sources	2.7	2.8	7.6	2.3	3.4	10.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Incidence of low-income

In 2005, immigrant women of all ages were more likely to be living in a low-income situation than Canadian-born women. Among the immigrant girls and women in an economic family, 20% lived below Statistics Canada's low income cut-off before tax, compared with 10% of the Canadian-born girls and women (Table 9.8). The incidence of low income among immigrant girls and women was also slightly higher than among their male counterparts (19%).

Of the total female immigrant population who lived in an economic family, girls under age 15 had the highest incidence of low income (40%). In contrast, senior immigrant women aged 65 and over had the lowest incidence of low income (9%). The high incidence of low-income among immigrant children was likely because of the difficult labour market conditions experienced by their parents whereas the lower incidence of low income for senior immigrants was mainly concentrated among those who immigrated to Canada many years ago and would have worked in Canada for a long period.²³⁰

Government transfers reduced the level of low income by 5 percentage points for immigrant girls and women who lived in an economic family. Their level of low income before tax in 2005 was 20% and after tax, it was 15%.

Incidence of low income also dropped with longer residence in Canada. In 2005, prevalence of low income after tax for recent immigrant women was 32%. It dropped to 20% among those who arrived in the second half of the 1990s and to 16% among those who immigrated from 1991 to 1995. After-tax low income was lowest for immigrant women who arrived before 1991—at 7%, their incidence of after-tax low income was on par with Canadian-born women.

Table 9.8

Prevalence of low income for economic family members, by immigration status, Canada, 2005

Prevalence of low income and age group	Canadian-born		Total immigrants		Recent immigrants	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
percentage						
Before tax in 2005 for economic family members						
All age groups	10.5	9.1	19.9	18.6	39.3	40.5
Less than 15 years	16.7	16.5	39.7	42.1	46.4	48.5
15 to 24	11.6	9.7	30.2	29.5	41.5	43.3
25 to 54	8.9	6.2	21.3	19.3	38.2	37.9
55 to 64	7.0	6.7	11.6	11.0	24.9	30.0
65 and over	3.6	3.1	9.4	9.2	22.1	26.4
After tax in 2005 for economic family members						
All age groups	7.4	6.4	14.9	13.9	32.1	33.2
Less than 15 years	12.1	11.9	32.3	34.2	38.5	40.1
15 to 24	8.4	6.8	23.9	23.2	33.9	35.8
25 to 54	6.3	4.3	16.6	14.8	31.3	31.0
55 to 64	4.8	4.8	8.3	8.5	18.7	23.3
65 and over	1.4	1.2	4.0	4.0	16.2	21.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

230. Hou, Feng, Yuqian Lu and Garnett Picot. 2009. "Immigrant low-income rates: The role of market income and government transfers." *Perspectives on Labour and Income*. Vol. 10, no. 12. December. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-001-X. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=75-001-X200911211055&lang=eng> (accessed January 13, 2011).

Employment earnings increased over time for immigrants of all admission categories

The Longitudinal Immigration Database examined the economic trajectories of immigrants who were admitted under different categories. It showed that as immigrant women's length of residence in Canada increased, so did their employment earnings, regardless of the categories under which they were admitted.

Immigrants who came as principal applicants in the Economic Class were admitted on the basis of their suitability for the Canadian labour force, therefore they generally had a more positive economic outcome than their counterparts admitted under the other categories (i.e., Family Class and Refugee Class). Immigrant women of core working age who came to Canada in 1991 as principal applicants in the Economic Class reported median earnings of about \$18,000 (in 2007 constant dollars) during their second year in Canada. Fifteen years later, by 2007, their median employment earnings had climbed to about \$33,000. Although those who came under the Family Class category had lower median earnings, these also increased over the 15-year period, from \$11,000 to \$25,000.

Share of total income from government transfers declined over time

Among immigrant women of core working age who arrived in 1991, employment earnings accounted for about three-quarters (75%) of total income by the second year after they landed. Another 6% of their total income came from self-employment and investment incomes. The remaining 19% came from government transfers such as employment insurance or welfare benefits.

The proportion of income from employment earnings for this cohort of immigrant women increased over time. By their fifteenth year in Canada, 86% of the total income was from employment earnings. Close to 10% was from self-employment and investment incomes. The remaining 4% came from government transfers.

The share of total income from employment earnings was higher among immigrant women who came as principal applicants in the Economic Class. It was 87% during their second year after arrival and increased to 91% after 15 years residing in Canada. Conversely, their share of government transfers dropped from 9% to 2% over the period.

Immigrant women who arrived in 2001 as principal applicants in the Economic Class also had a large proportion of their total income from employment earnings, around 90% during the second year after arrival.

Principal applicants who arrived after 2002 had higher median earnings than earlier cohorts

Studies have shown that immigrants who arrived during the 1990s tended to experience more challenges in the labour market and hence had lower economic outcomes than immigrants who came in previous decades.²³¹

In comparison with immigrant women of the 1990s, those who arrived after 2000 experienced better economic outcomes in terms of employment earnings. Among core working age principal applicants in the Economic Class who came in 2004, the median earnings in their second year after landing were about \$16,000, about \$2,000 more than their counterparts who came in 1991. However, by their 5th year in Canada, median earnings of the 2004 cohort increased to \$29,000, about \$7000 more than those of the 1991 cohort. In other words, median earnings increased at a faster pace among female economic principal applicants who came to Canada since 2000.

231. Chui, Tina and Danielle Zietsma. 2003. "Earnings of immigrants in the 1990s." *Canadian Social Trends*. No. 70. Fall. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-008. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=11-008-XWE&lang=eng> (accessed December 20, 2010).

Filed taxation on employment earnings soon after arrival

Both immigrant women and men filed their employment earnings taxes soon after landing in Canada. The time taken to report earnings for the first time since landing has declined for more recent immigrants. It took an average of 1.5 years after landing in 1991 for immigrant women of core working age to first file their taxes. This time before filing taxes dropped to about seven months for their counterparts who immigrated in 2001.

Immigrant women who came as principal applicants in the Economic Class filed taxes on employment earnings even sooner than women who were admitted under other categories. For example, principal applicants in the Economic Class took about four months to first file taxes on earnings, while those who came as a spouse or dependant of a principal economic applicant or as a Refugee Class applicant took about five months.

Definitions

Immigrant population refers to a person who is or has ever been a landed immigrant. A landed immigrant or permanent resident is a person who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants are either Canadian citizens by naturalization (the citizenship process) or permanent residents (landed immigrants) under Canadian legislation. Some immigrants have resided in Canada for a number of years, while others have arrived recently. Most immigrants are born outside Canada, but a small number are born in Canada.

Recent immigrants (also known as newcomers) are landed immigrants who came to Canada up to five years prior to a given census year. For the 2006 Census, recent immigrants are landed immigrants who arrived in Canada between January 1, 2001 and Census Day, May 16, 2006. Similarly, recent immigrants in the 2001 Census were newcomers at the time of the 2001 Census, i.e., they came to Canada between January 1, 1996 and Census Day, May 15, 2001.

Non-permanent residents are people from another country who had a Work or Study Permit, or who were refugee claimants at the time of the census, and family members living in Canada with them.

Permanent residents, defined by The *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, fall into three basic categories: Economic, Family and Protected Persons. Permanent residents are persons who have not become Canadian citizens, but have been authorized to live and work in Canada indefinitely, provided that they meet residency requirements and do not lose their status by reason of serious criminality, security, human rights violations, organized crime or misrepresentation.

Temporary residents are foreign workers, international students and visitors who gain temporary entry by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

The concepts of permanent residents and temporary residents are used when administrative data from the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada is analysed. They are both different from the concepts of immigrants and non-permanent residents used in the Canadian census.

Generation status indicates for how many generations a person and their family have been in Canada. It is derived from place of birth of respondent, place of birth of father and place of birth of mother and it pertains only to the population aged 15 and over. A person is defined as either 'first generation,' 'second generation' or 'third generation or more,' which are defined as follows:

- **first generation:** Persons born outside Canada. For the most part, these are people who are now, or have ever been, landed immigrants in Canada. Also included in the first generation are a small number of people born outside Canada to parents who are Canadian citizens by birth. In addition, the first generation includes people who are non-permanent residents.
- **second generation:** Persons born inside Canada with at least one parent born outside Canada. This includes: (a) people born in Canada with both parents born outside Canada and (b) people born in Canada with one parent born in Canada and one parent born outside Canada (these people may have grandparents born inside or outside Canada as well).
- **third generation or more:** Persons born inside Canada with both parents born inside Canada (these people may have grandparents born inside or outside Canada as well).

The *Employment Equity Act* defines **visible minorities** as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.” Under this definition, regulations specify the following groups as visible minorities: Chinese, South Asians, Blacks, Arabs, West Asians, Filipinos, Southeast Asians, Latin Americans, Japanese, Koreans and other visible minority groups, such as Pacific Islanders. For details on each of the groups that make up the visible minority population, see the *Visible Minority Population and Population Group Reference Guide, 2006 Census*. Catalogue no. [97-562-GWE2006003](#)

Census metropolitan area is an area consisting of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major core. A census metropolitan area must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core.

Marital status refers to a person's de facto conjugal status.

- **Married and common-law:** Persons currently married whose spouse is living, unless the couple is separated or divorced, and persons living common-law.
- **Separated, but still legally married:** Persons currently married, but who are no longer living with their spouse (for any reason other than illness or work) and have not obtained a divorce. Persons who are separated but who live with a common-law partner are not included in this category.
- **Divorced:** Persons who have obtained a legal divorce and who have not remarried. Persons who are divorced but who live with a common-law partner are not included in this category.
- **Widowed:** Persons who have lost their spouse through death and who have not remarried. Persons who are widowed but who live with a common-law partner are not included in this category.
- **Never legally married (single):** Persons who have never married (including all persons less than 15 years of age) and persons whose marriage has been annulled and who have not remarried. Persons who are single and live with a common-law partner are not included in this category.

Citizenship refers to the legal citizenship status of the respondent. Canadian citizenship is obtained either by birth or by naturalization. A small number of individuals who were born outside Canada, but to at least one Canadian parent, are considered Canadian citizens by birth. Only those landed immigrants who have met certain criteria are eligible for Canadian citizenship by naturalization.

Naturalization refers to the process by which a person is granted citizenship of Canada under the *Citizenship Act*. Permanent residents who have met certain criteria such as residency, language and other requirements are eligible to apply for Canadian citizenship through naturalization.

Attendance at school refers to the attendance and the type of school attended during the nine-month period from September 2005 to May 16, 2006. An individual's attendance could be either full time or part time (day or evening), even if the individual dropped out after registration. Attendance was counted only for courses that could be used as credits toward a certificate, diploma or degree from a recognized educational institution (elementary or secondary school, registered apprenticeship programs, trade schools, colleges, CEGEPs and universities).

Major field of study refers to the predominant discipline or area of learning or training of a person's highest postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree. For more information on the classification of the fields, refer to *2006 Census Dictionary*, Catalogue no. 92-566-XWE.

Occupation refers to the kind of work people were doing during the reference week, as determined by their kind of work and the description of the main activities in their job. If the person did not have a job during the week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to enumeration (May 16, 2006), the data relate to the job of longest duration since January 1, 2005. People with two or more jobs were to report the information for the job at which they worked the most hours. For more information on the classification of the occupational group, refer to *2006 Census Dictionary*, Catalogue no. 92-566-XWE.

Employment rate is the number of persons for a particular group (age, sex, marital status, geographical area, etc.) employed in the week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to Census Day (May 16, 2006), expressed as a percentage of the total population in that particular group.

Unemployment rate is the unemployed persons in a particular group (age, sex, marital status, geographical area, etc.) expressed as a percentage of the labour force in that group, in the week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to Census Day (May 16, 2006).

Employment income or earnings refers to total income received by people 15 years of age and over during calendar year 2005 as wages and salaries, net income from a non-farm unincorporated business or professional practice or net farm self-employment income.

Low-income cut-offs (LICOs) are income thresholds, determined by analysing family expenditure data, below which families will devote a larger share of income to the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than the average family would. To reflect differences in the costs of necessities among different community and family sizes, LICOs are defined for five categories of community size and seven of family size. LICOs before and after tax can all be used.

Work activity refers to the number of weeks in which a person worked for pay or in self-employment in 2005 at all jobs held, even if only for a few hours, and whether these weeks were mostly full time (30 hours or more per week) or mostly part time (1 to 29 hours per week).

The term 'full-year, full-time workers' refers to people aged 15 and over who worked 49 to 52 weeks (mostly full time) in 2005 for pay or in self-employment.

Census family refers to a married couple (with or without children of either or both spouses), a couple living common-law (with or without children of either or both partners) or a lone parent of any marital status, with at least one child living in the same dwelling. A couple may be of opposite or same sex. Children in a census family include grandchildren living with their grandparents but with no parents present.

Economic family refers to a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law or adoption. A couple may be of opposite or same sex. For 2006, foster children are included.

Chapter 10

Visible Minority Women
by Tina Chui and H  l  ne Maheux

This chapter examines the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of visible minority women in Canada.

The visible minority population in Canada comprises many groups, each with its own history of immigration to Canada. Some are relatively new to the country; others have lived here for many generations. The analysis will address this population's diversity by evaluating the differences between the visible minority groups, as well as between those who came to Canada as immigrants and those who were born in Canada. The visible minority population has a somewhat different age structure than the non-visible minority population. To address this aspect, some of the analysis—especially with respect to labour market experience—will also evaluate differences between specific age groups.

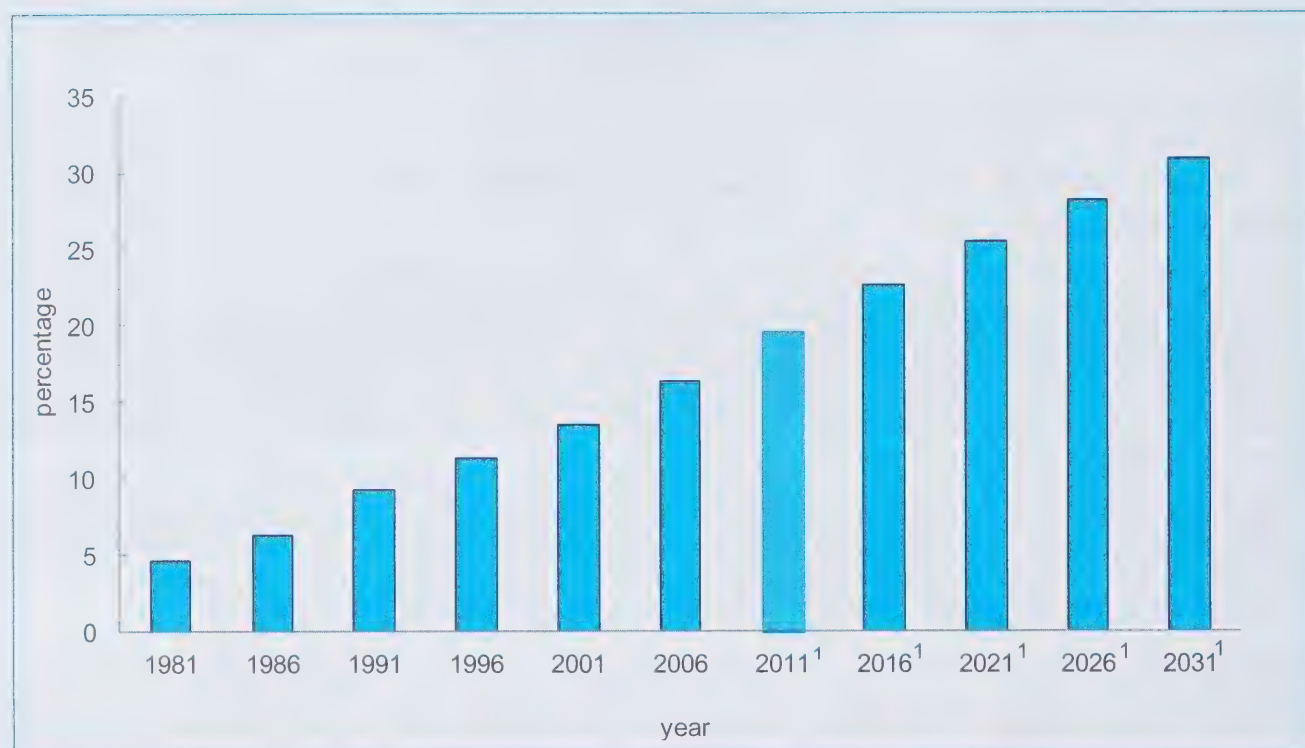
“Visible minority” is a uniquely Canadian way to define a population for the purposes of employment equity. The visible minority population is one of the four designated groups identified under the *Employment Equity Act*. The goal of the act is to achieve workplace equality and to correct representation in the workplace for the four designated groups: women, visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples and people with disabilities.

The *Employment Equity Act* defines visible minorities as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.” Using this definition, regulations specify the following groups within the visible minority population: South Asian, Chinese, Black, Arab, West Asian, Filipino, Southeast Asian, Latin American, Japanese and Korean.

The visible minority population is growing

In 2006, about 5.1 million individuals reported being members of the visible minority population: 51%, or 2.6 million, were women. Visible minority women made up 16.4% of the total female population (Chart 10.1). Canada's visible minority population has grown steadily between 1981 and 2006, in large part due to increasing immigration from countries other than Europe. In 1981, when data for the visible minority population was first derived, about 567,500 women in Canada were members of the visible minority population, comprising 4.7% of the total female population. In 1991, the number of visible minority women doubled to about 1.3 million and, in 2001, further increased to just over 2.0 million, or 13.5% of the female population.

The visible minority population grew at a much faster pace than the total population. From 2001 to 2006, the growth rate of visible minority women was 28%, five times faster than the 5.6% increase for the total female population in Canada and 13 times faster than the 2.1% increase among women who were not members of a visible minority.

Chart 10.1**Proportion of visible minority women, Canada, 1981 to 2031**

1. Projections.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1981 to 2006; and Statistics Canada, 2010. *Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population, 2006 to 2031*, Catalogue no. 91-551-X.

A key factor in the growth of the visible minority population has been the rising number of recent immigrants from non-European countries.

Changing immigration patterns

Some immigrants have resided in Canada for a number of years, while others have arrived recently. Recent immigrants are defined as landed immigrants who came to Canada up to five years prior to a given census year. In 1981, 69% of all recent immigrant women in Canada were born in non-European countries. In 1991, this number had grown to 77% and by 2006, it had reached 84%.

As a result of these changing immigration patterns, the proportion of recent immigrants who belong to a visible minority group increased. In 1981, 55% of recent immigrant women belonged to a visible minority group; in 1991, the proportion was 71% and by 2001, it reached 73%. This share continues to increase: in 2006, 76% of recent immigrant women were members of the visible minority population.

If current immigration patterns continue, Canada's female population who are members of visible minorities could reach 6.6 million or roughly 31% of the total female population by 2031, according to Statistics Canada's population projections.²³²

232. Caron Malenfant, Éric, André Lebel and Laurent Martel. 2010. *Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population, 2006 to 2031*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 91-551-X. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/91-551-x/91-551-x2010001-eng.htm> (accessed January 13, 2011)

A diverse population

Among the many groups that make up the visible minority population, the three largest are Chinese, South Asian (e.g. East Indian, Pakistani and Sri Lankan) and Black. Sixty-four percent of visible minority women belonged to one of these groups in 2006.

Overall, South Asian was the largest visible minority group: about 1,262,900 women and men identified themselves as South Asian (Table 10.1). In 2006, South Asian surpassed Chinese (1,216,600 individuals) to become the largest visible minority group. Chinese had previously been the largest at the time of the 2001 Census. However, Chinese women were still the largest group of visible minority women in 2006. They made up a slightly larger proportion of visible minority women (24.3%), compared with South Asian women (24.0%). Black was the third-largest visible minority group for women in 2006, making up 15.7%.

Other groups include Filipinos, who represented 9.0% of the female visible minority population in 2006, Latin Americans (6.0%), Southeast Asians (4.7%), Arabs (4.7%), West Asians (2.9%), Koreans (2.8%) and Japanese (1.7%).

A small percentage (4.0%) of visible minority women reported belonging to more than one visible minority group or to other visible minorities such as Pacific Islanders.

Table 10.1
Visible minority groups, Canada, 2006

Visible minority group	Women			Men		
	number	as a % of all women in Canada	as a % of all visible minority women	number	as a % of all men in Canada	as a % of all visible minority men
Total — Visible minority	2,604,065	16.4	100.0	2,464,025	16.2	100.0
Chinese	632,310	4.0	24.3	584,255	3.9	23.7
South Asian	625,675	3.9	24.0	637,190	4.0	25.9
Black	408,110	2.6	15.7	375,685	2.5	15.2
Filipino	235,060	1.5	9.0	175,640	1.3	7.1
Latin American	156,345	1.0	6.0	147,900	1.0	6.0
Southeast Asian	123,510	0.8	4.7	116,425	0.8	4.7
Arab	122,970	0.8	4.7	142,580	0.9	5.8
West Asian	76,000	0.5	2.9	80,700	0.5	3.3
Korean	73,295	0.5	2.8	68,595	0.5	2.8
Japanese	45,145	0.3	1.7	36,160	0.3	1.5
Other visible minority	37,580	0.2	1.4	33,840	0.2	1.4
Multiple visible minority	68,065	0.4	2.6	65,055	0.4	2.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Between 2001 and 2006, West Asian women had the largest growth among visible minority women, an increase of 48%, from about 51,000 to 76,000 (Chart 10.2). Latin American (from about 111,000 to 156,000) and Korean (from about 52,000 to 73,000) women's population each grew 41% over the same period.

Chart 10.2**Number of women by visible minority group, Canada, 2001 and 2006**

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

One in three visible minority women are born in Canada

The majority (68%) of visible minority women were immigrants in 2006, and about 29% were born in Canada.

The proportion of Canadian-born among the visible minority population varied, subject to each group's immigration patterns and fertility rates. Generally, groups that have long histories in Canada and relatively little recent immigration have higher proportions of Canadian-born. For example, the Japanese and Black have long immigration histories and relatively little recent immigration. Consequently, they had the largest proportion of Canadian-born, 56% and 43%, respectively (Chart 10.3).

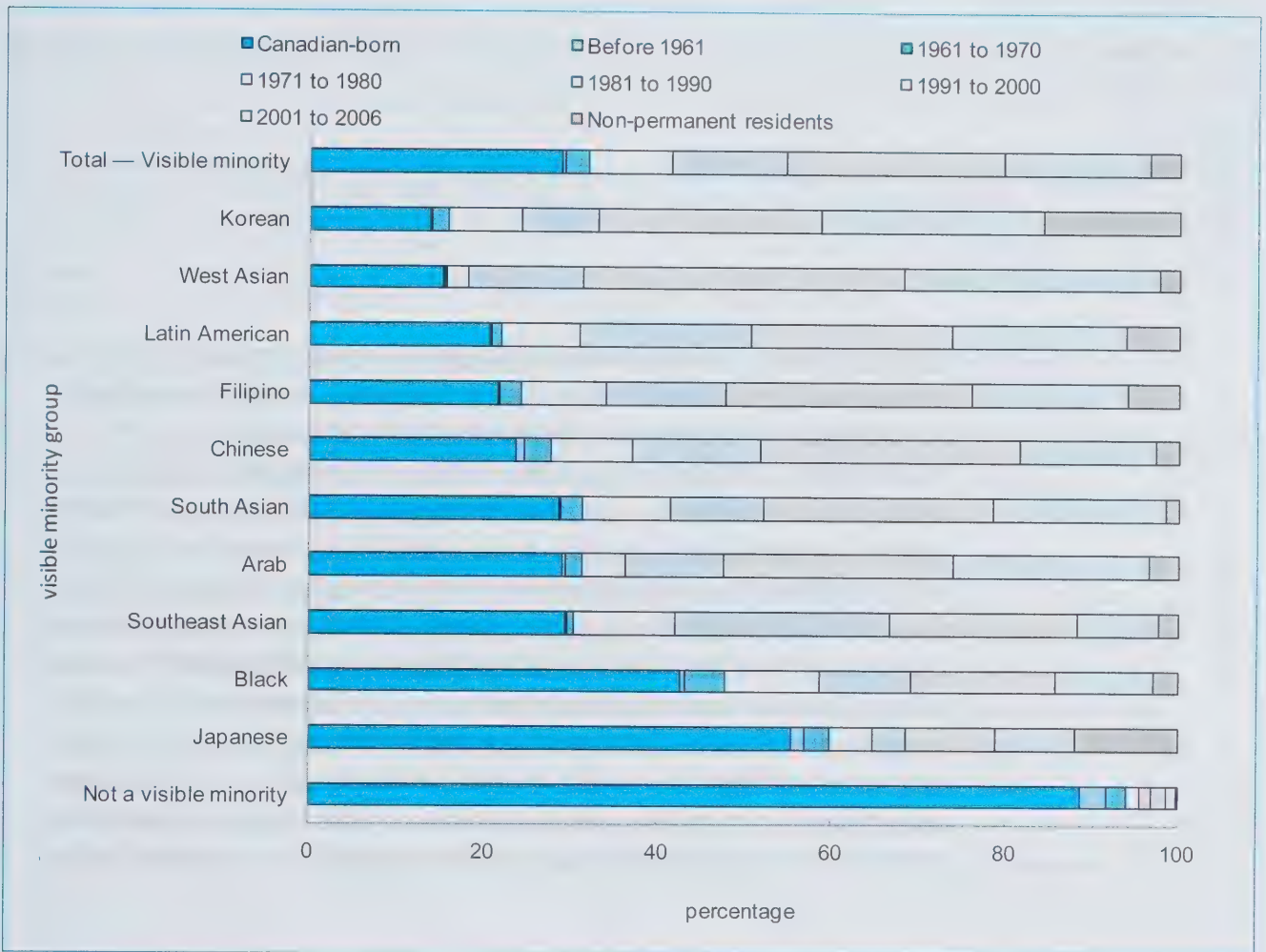
Although the South Asian and Chinese groups also have a relatively long history in Canada, they continue to immigrate to Canada in significant numbers. In 2006, 29% of South Asian women and 24% of Chinese women were born in Canada.

At 29% each, the percentage of Canadian-born among Southeast Asian and Arab women was the same as for all visible minority women in Canada. Among other visible minority groups, the percentages of Canadian-born women were 22% of Filipinas, 21% of Latin Americans, 15% of West Asians and 14% of Koreans.

Non-permanent residents (see definition at the end of the chapter) made up a small proportion (3%) of visible minority women who lived in Canada on Census Day 2006.

Chart 10.3

Female visible minority groups, by immigrant status and period of immigration, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Generational status reflects immigration history

The generational status of the various visible minority groups further reflected their history of immigration to Canada.

Of Canada's total female population aged 15 and older, 24% were considered "first generation" (that is, born outside Canada). Another 16% were "second generation" (born in Canada with at least one parent born outside Canada) and 60% were "third generation or more" (born in Canada with both parents born in Canada).

A majority of the visible minority population is first generation in Canada since the majority of them are immigrants. In 2006, 84% of visible minority women aged 15 and over were considered first generation (Chart 10.4); 13% were second generation and only 2% were third generation or more.

Although Chinese and South Asians have a relatively long history in Canada, continual immigration led to a large proportion of their women having first-generation status (86% for both groups) and a small proportion having third-generation status or more (2% and 1% respectively).

Some of the Black visible minority group have ancestors who migrated to Canada a few hundred years ago; others arrived in recent decades. In 2006, 8% of women who belonged to the Black visible minority group were third-generation or more.

The Japanese visible minority group had the largest proportion (25%) of women who were third-generation or more in 2006.

Chart 10.4

Generational status of women aged 15 and over, by visible minority group, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Visible minority immigrant women come from many countries

Visible minority immigrant women come from all over the world. In 2006, a majority of South Asian immigrant women came from countries of the Indian subcontinent such as India (49%), Pakistan (14%), Sri Lanka (12%), and Bangladesh (3%). Other South Asian women came from Guyana (5%), Trinidad and Tobago (3%), Fiji (3%), Tanzania (2%), Kenya (2%) and the United Kingdom (2%).

The Black visible minority population was particularly diverse. Black immigrant women reported more than 150 source countries of birth. These countries included Jamaica (28%), Haiti (15%), Trinidad and Tobago (5%), Somalia (5%), Ethiopia (4%), Ghana (4%), Guyana (4%), Nigeria (3%), Barbados (3%) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (3%).

Most Chinese immigrant women reported the People's Republic of China (54%) and Hong Kong, Special Administrative Region (24%) as their place of birth. Taiwan (7%) and Vietnam (6%) were the third and fourth most common places of birth among Chinese immigrant women. Another 2% of them immigrated from Malaysia and 1% from Singapore.

The top places of birth for West Asian immigrant women were Iran (58%) and Afghanistan (24%). For Arab immigrant women, the top places were Lebanon (25%) and Egypt (13%).

El Salvador (18%), Colombia (15%) and Mexico (11%) were the three leading source countries among Latin American immigrant women.

Most live in large population centres

In 2006, 96% of visible minority women lived in only four provinces: Ontario, with a 54% share of visible minority women, British Columbia with 20%, Quebec with 13% and Alberta with 9% (Table 10.2). The remaining 4% of visible minority women lived in the other provinces and territories. In comparison, 84% of women who were not a visible minority lived in these provinces.

Over one-half of Canada's visible minority women resided in Ontario and one in five lived in British Columbia. Therefore, visible minority women made up a high percentage of the female population in these two provinces—23% in Ontario and 25% in British Columbia, well ahead of the other provinces. In Quebec, visible minority women accounted for 9% of the female population; in Alberta, about 14%.

Table 10.2
Distribution of female visible minority population, Canada, 2006

Province or territory of residence	as a % of all visible minority women in Canada			as a % of all women in province or territory	
	number				
Canada	2,604,065	100.0		16.4	
Newfoundland and Labrador	2,705	0.1		1.1	
Prince Edward Island	945	0.0		1.4	
Nova Scotia	19,430	0.7		4.2	
New Brunswick	6,595	0.3		1.8	
Quebec	333,475	12.8		8.8	
Ontario	1,412,205	54.2		23.0	
Manitoba	54,760	2.1		9.5	
Saskatchewan	16,675	0.6		3.4	
Alberta	230,460	8.9		14.2	
British Columbia	524,745	20.2		25.3	
Yukon	630	0.0		4.2	
Northwest Territories	1,190	0.0		5.9	
Nunavut	230	0.0		1.6	

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

In 2006, 96% of visible minority women lived in one of the 33 census metropolitan areas (CMAs) in Canada, compared with 63% of non-visible minority women.

The census metropolitan area of Toronto was home to the largest share of Canada's female visible minority population, with 43% of the total female visible minority population in 2006 (Table 10.3).

Within the census metropolitan area of Toronto, certain municipalities were more likely to have visible minorities. For example, 54% of visible minority women in the CMA of Toronto lived in the municipality of Toronto in 2006; 15% lived in Mississauga and 11% in Brampton.

The Vancouver CMA had the second-largest proportion of visible minority women—18% of the total female visible minority population. Like the Toronto CMA, certain municipalities in Vancouver also had higher shares of visible minority women in 2006: Vancouver (34%), Surrey (20%), Richmond (13%) and Burnaby (13%).

In fact, in both the Toronto and Vancouver CMAs, the ratio of visible minority women to the total female population was 2.6.

The Montréal CMA had the third-largest share of the female visible minority population. In 2006, about 12% of Canada's female visible minority population resided in the Montréal CMA. The city of Montréal topped all municipalities with 70% of all visible minority women in its CMA. Laval followed with 8.7%.

The two CMAs in Alberta—Calgary and Edmonton—were home to 4.6% and 3.4% of Canada's visible minority women, accounting for 22% and 17% of Calgary and Edmonton's female populations.

While only 0.7% of all Canada's visible minority women lived in the CMA of Abbotsford in 2006, these women made up over one-fifth of the CMA's female population.

Table 10.3

Distribution of total female population, total female immigrant population, recent immigrant women, and visible minority women, by census metropolitan area, Canada, 2006

Census metropolitan area	Total female population	Total immigrant women percentage	Recent immigrant women	Recent immigrant women / Total female population ratio	Visible minority women %	Visible minority women / Total female population ratio
Canada	100.0	100.0	100.0	...	100.0	...
St. John's	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Halifax	1.2	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5
Moncton	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1
Saint John	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2
Saguenay	0.5	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
Québec	2.3	0.4	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.1
Sherbrooke	0.6	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.2
Trois-Rivières	0.5	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1
Montréal	11.6	11.7	14.4	1.2	11.5	1.0
Ottawa-Gatineau	3.6	3.3	3.2	0.9	3.5	1.0
Kingston	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.4
Peterborough	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2
Oshawa	1.0	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.6
Toronto	16.4	37.8	40.6	2.5	43.2	2.6
Hamilton	2.2	2.7	1.9	0.9	1.6	0.7
St.Catharines-Niagara	1.2	1.2	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.4
Kitchener	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.0	1.2	0.8
Brantford	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.3
Guelph	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.9	0.3	0.8
London	1.5	1.4	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.7
Windsor	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.0
Barrie	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.4
Grand Sudbury	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Thunder Bay	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
Winnipeg	2.2	2.0	2.1	1.0	2.0	0.9
Regina	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.4
Saskatoon	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4
Calgary	3.4	4.0	5.2	1.5	4.6	1.4
Edmonton	3.2	3.0	2.9	0.9	3.4	1.1
Kelowna	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.3
Abbotsford	0.5	0.6	0.5	1.0	0.7	1.4
Vancouver	6.7	13.6	13.9	2.1	17.5	2.6
Victoria	1.1	1.0	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

A relatively young population

The female visible minority population in Canada is generally younger than the overall female population and the overall non-visible minority female population. In 2006, 22% of visible minority women were under 15 years of age, compared with 17% of the overall female population and 16% of the non-visible minority female population. Women of core working age (25 to 54) comprised 48% of visible minority women, compared with 44% of the total female population and 43% of the non-visible minority female population.

At the other end of the age spectrum, 8% of visible minority women were 65 and over, compared with 14% of the total female population and 16% of the non-visible minority female population.

The young age structure of the visible minority female population is also reflected in its median age. Because a large portion of visible minority women are immigrants, their significantly younger age structure brings down the median age of all visible minority women. The median age of visible minority women was 33.3 years in 2006. The median age for the total female population was 40.0 years and 41.5 years for non-visible minority women (Table 10.4).

Certain groups had an even younger population than the overall visible minority population. For example, 28% of Arab women and 27% of Black women were under the age of 15. The median ages of Arab women was 28.3 years; of Black women, 29.6.

Although their median ages were lower than that of the overall female population, Chinese, Filipinas and Japanese women had a higher median age than the other groups in the female visible minority population: 37.8 years for Chinese women, 37.3 for Filipinas and 36.7 for Japanese women.

The younger age structure among the female visible minority population was due to the immigration of younger individuals who were also in their child-bearing years. Most individuals immigrated when they were relatively young: they were at the stage of their lives when they would have young children. The children of visible minority women might also identify themselves as members of a visible minority. As a result, the overall visible minority population had a young age structure.

In 2006, the median age of recent immigrant women for visible minority (31.0 years) and non-visible minority groups (31.2 years) was about the same.

The median age for Canadian-born women who were not members of a visible minority was 39.5 years. In contrast, the median age for Canadian-born visible minority women was 12.8 years likely due to the Canadian-born children of visible minority parents who immigrated to Canada in recent decades. Canadian-born Japanese women, with a median age of 34.7 years, were the only group with a similar median age to that of Canadian-born non-visible minority women.

Table 10.4**Age groups of the female population, by visible minority group, Canada, 2006**

Visible minority group	Total age	Age group				65 and older	Median age
		Less than 15	15 to 24	25 to 54	55 to 64		
Total — Women	100.0	17.1	13.0	44.1	11.7	14.2	40.0
Visible minority women	100.0	21.6	14.8	47.7	8.2	7.8	33.3
Chinese	100.0	16.9	14.2	48.7	9.0	11.1	37.8
South Asian	100.0	23.5	14.3	46.5	8.4	7.4	31.5
Black	100.0	26.8	15.9	42.9	7.8	6.5	29.6
Filipino	100.0	18.3	11.3	53.5	9.8	7.1	37.3
Latin American	100.0	19.2	16.5	51.9	7.3	5.0	32.6
Southeast Asian	100.0	21.6	15.5	50.0	6.2	6.6	32.7
Arab	100.0	27.9	15.8	46.2	5.3	4.8	28.3
West Asian	100.0	19.9	18.4	49.3	7.1	5.2	31.8
Korean	100.0	17.1	18.9	50.9	7.3	5.8	34.1
Japanese	100.0	15.8	12.1	47.7	10.4	14.0	36.7
Other visible minority	100.0	18.7	15.7	49.1	9.0	7.4	34.2
Multiple visible minority	100.0	32.8	16.5	39.4	6.4	4.8	25.4
Non-visible minority women	100.0	16.2	12.6	43.4	12.4	15.5	41.5
Total — Men	100.0	18.6	14.0	43.8	11.7	11.8	38.3
Visible minority men	100.0	23.7	16.2	45.2	8.1	6.8	31.8
Non-visible minority men	100.0	17.7	13.6	43.6	12.4	12.8	39.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Family status varies by visible minority group

In 2006, visible minority women aged 15 and over lived most often with members of their family (90%); this proportion was 81% among non-visible minority women (Table 10.5). Just 4% of visible minority women lived with non-relatives and 6% lived alone. Visible minority women were less likely to live alone than non-visible minority women: 15% of non-visible minority women lived alone in 2006.

South Asian (95%), West Asian (93%) and Arab (93%) women were the most likely among all visible minority groups to live with their family. On the other hand, Japanese women had the lowest percentage (77%) that lived with their family. In fact, the proportion of Japanese women living alone was the same as that of non-visible minority women, 15%.

In 2006, 51% of visible minority women aged 15 and over lived with their spouse, compared with 46% of women who were not members of a visible minority. South Asian (62%) and Arab (60%) women were the most likely to live with their spouse; Black (29%) and Latin American women (46%) were the least likely.

Visible minority women (4%) were considerably less likely to live in a common-law relationship than women who were non-visible minority (12%). Latin American women had the largest proportion of women in a common-law relationship (8%); South Asian women had the smallest (1%).

Visible minority women were more likely to be lone parents than visible minority men. In 2006, 10% of visible minority women aged 15 and over were lone parents, compared to 2% of visible minority men. A higher proportion of women than men were lone-parents, regardless of visible minority status. For non-visible minorities, 8% of women were lone-parents compared to 2% of men.

Black visible minority women had the largest share of lone parents among the various groups (24%), followed by Latin American women (14%), Southeast Asian women (12%) and West Asian women (10%).

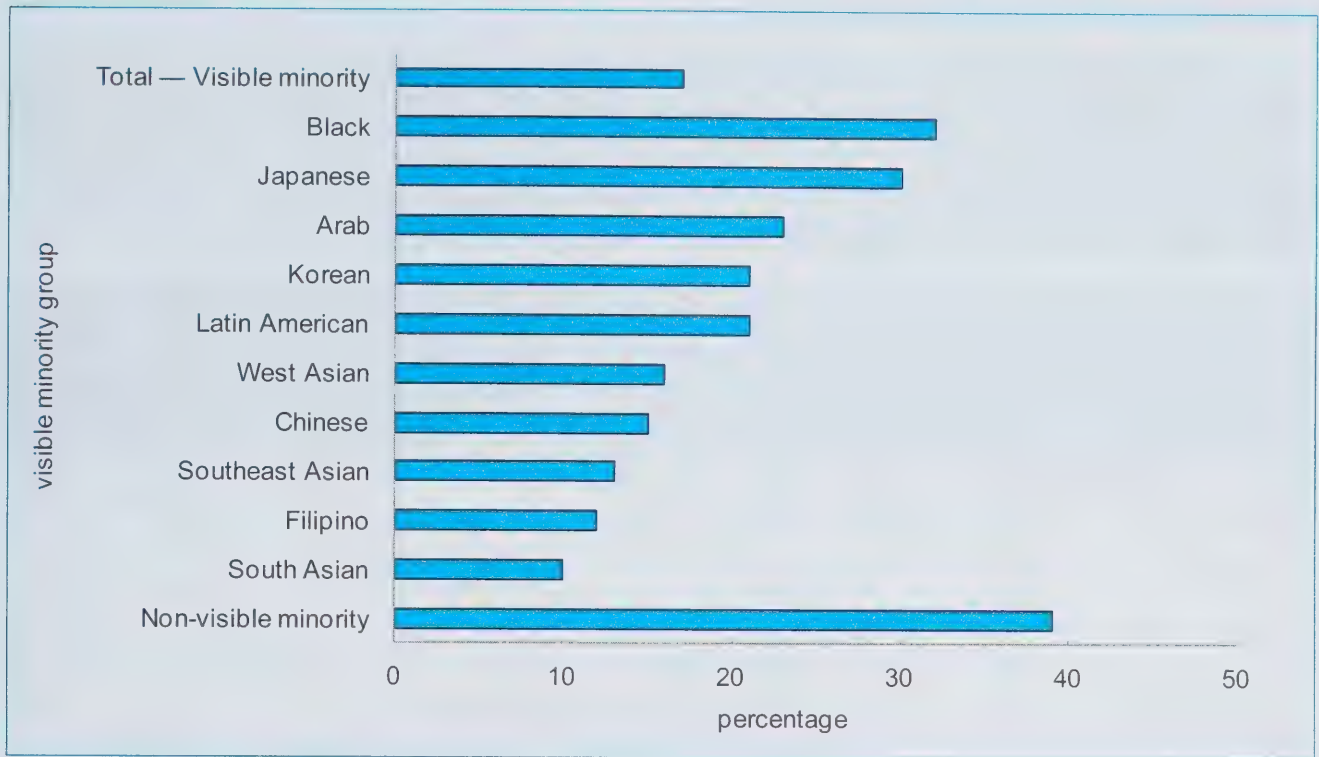
Table 10.5

Family status of population aged 15 and over, by visible minority group, Canada, 2006

Visible minority group	Total — Living with their family								
	Total	Spouses	Common-law partners	Lone parents	Children living at home	Living with other relatives	Living with non-relative	Living alone	
									percentage
Visible minority women	100.0	89.9	50.6	3.6	10.2	19.8	5.6	3.7	6.4
Chinese	100.0	89.8	54.1	3.1	7.2	20.0	5.4	3.7	6.5
South Asian	100.0	95.2	62.3	1.4	5.7	20.0	5.8	1.3	3.5
Black	100.0	84.2	29.0	5.0	23.6	20.6	6.1	3.9	11.9
Filipino	100.0	85.0	48.0	4.7	7.9	15.9	8.5	9.9	5.0
Latin American	100.0	90.3	45.8	7.7	14.1	18.3	4.3	3.6	6.0
Southeast Asian	100.0	90.9	47.2	6.4	11.5	19.2	6.5	4.3	4.8
Arab	100.0	93.5	60.0	1.8	7.5	20.5	3.7	1.3	5.3
West Asian	100.0	92.9	51.8	1.7	10.1	24.9	4.4	1.8	5.3
Korean	100.0	89.6	52.2	2.4	8.8	21.7	4.5	4.3	6.1
Japanese	100.0	77.4	50.4	7.1	5.7	12.1	2.2	7.9	14.7
Other visible minority	100.0	87.9	43.4	5.6	13.4	20.4	5.1	3.2	8.9
Multiple visible minority	100.0	89.0	41.6	5.2	10.8	26.6	4.9	2.8	8.1
Non-visible minority women	100.0	81.3	45.8	11.7	8.3	13.3	2.2	3.2	15.5
Visible minority men	100.0	88.3	53.6	4.0	2.0	25.3	3.4	4.6	7.0
Non-visible minority men	100.0	82.8	48.5	12.4	2.3	17.8	1.7	4.4	12.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

The living arrangements of senior women differ considerably by visible minority status. Visible minority women aged 65 and over were more likely to live with family members, including extended family, and less likely to live alone than senior women who were not a member of a visible minority. In 2006, 81% of visible minority women aged 65 and over lived with their family and 17% lived alone (Chart 10.5). In comparison, nearly 60% of non-visible minority senior women who lived with their family and 39% lived alone.

Chart 10.5**Senior women aged 65 and over living alone, by visible minority group, Canada, 2006**

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Most could converse in an official language

Two thirds (66%) of visible minority women reported a mother tongue other than English or French. Of these women, 80% were immigrants; the remaining 20% were visible minority women born in Canada.

Among all visible minority women, West Asian women were the most likely to report a non-English or non-French mother tongue (90%); Japanese women (54%) were the least likely. The difference between these two groups was likely because of the relatively small percentage of Canadian-born West Asian women (15%) compared with Japanese women (55%).

The vast majority (91%) of visible minority women reported that they could speak at least one of Canada's official languages (Table 10.6). The linguistic profile of visible minority women was very similar to that of immigrant women. Among visible minority women who had recently immigrated, 88% said they could converse in at least one official language.

The proportion of visible minority women who could converse in at least one official language was even higher among those of core working age (25 to 54). Most visible minority women (94%) in this age group said they could carry a conversation in at least one official language. Conversely, 6% of the visible minority women in the same age group could not speak English or French.

Older visible minority women were more likely to report not being able to speak English or French— as did 40% of visible minority women aged 65 and over in 2006. Among this group, 61 % of those who arrived in Canada after 2001 were unable to speak English or French.

Table 10.6
Knowledge of official languages, by visible minority group, Canada, 2006

Visible minority group	Total	At least one official language	percentage			
			English only	French only	Both English and French	Neither English nor French
Visible minority women	100.0	91.2	75.7	4.5	10.9	8.8
Chinese	100.0	82.8	74.4	1.5	6.9	17.2
South Asian	100.0	90.4	82.6	0.3	7.4	9.6
Black	100.0	98.8	68.9	11.9	18.0	1.2
Filipino	100.0	99.0	93.7	0.1	5.2	1.0
Latin American	100.0	92.1	60.1	14.4	17.6	7.9
Southeast Asian	100.0	88.3	67.8	7.0	13.6	11.7
Arab	100.0	94.1	48.1	17.1	28.9	5.9
West Asian	100.0	90.4	76.9	2.2	11.3	9.6
Korean	100.0	88.5	81.8	0.5	6.2	11.5
Japanese	100.0	96.6	87.6	0.7	8.3	3.4
Other visible minority	100.0	98.4	88.7	1.6	8.1	1.7
Multiple visible minority	100.0	96.3	81.7	2.3	12.4	3.7
Non-visible minority women	100.0	99.4	65.0	15.8	18.5	0.6
Visible minority men	100.0	94.1	78.9	3.8	11.4	5.9
Non-visible minority men	100.0	99.5	66.6	14.2	18.8	0.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

A well-educated population

Canada's visible minority women were relatively well educated. In 2006, 26% of visible minority women aged 15 and over had a university degree (Table 10.7). The proportion was even higher (35%) among visible minority women aged 25 to 54. In comparison, 23% of non-visible minority women of core working age held a university degree.

Table 10.7

Educational attainment of population aged 15 and over, by visible minority group, Canada, 2006

Visible minority group	Total	No certificate, diploma or degree	High school certificate or equivalent	Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	University certificate or degree
				percentage			
Visible minority women	100.0	21.3	24.7	5.5	14.3	7.9	26.3
Chinese	100.0	22.9	24.4	2.9	11.7	7.9	30.1
South Asian	100.0	23.2	26.4	3.8	11.5	7.6	27.5
Black	100.0	21.3	24.1	11.0	22.3	6.7	14.5
Filipino	100.0	10.0	18.9	6.1	15.1	14.1	35.9
Latin American	100.0	22.1	25.8	9.9	17.3	5.9	19.0
Southeast Asian	100.0	34.7	28.1	5.5	12.2	4.5	15.0
Arab	100.0	20.6	23.3	5.4	12.7	7.5	30.5
West Asian	100.0	21.2	26.1	6.1	11.2	6.8	28.6
Korean	100.0	12.1	26.1	2.6	10.0	9.5	39.7
Japanese	100.0	10.8	25.0	4.8	21.5	7.0	30.9
Other visible minority	100.0	25.1	29.6	6.5	19.6	6.2	13.0
Multiple visible minority	100.0	20.6	24.0	5.9	16.7	7.5	25.3
Non-visible minority women	100.0	23.8	27.0	8.0	20.1	4.4	16.6
Visible minority men	100.0	19.0	25.1	6.8	12.2	7.1	29.7
Non-visible minority men	100.0	25.0	24.2	15.6	15.8	3.3	16.2

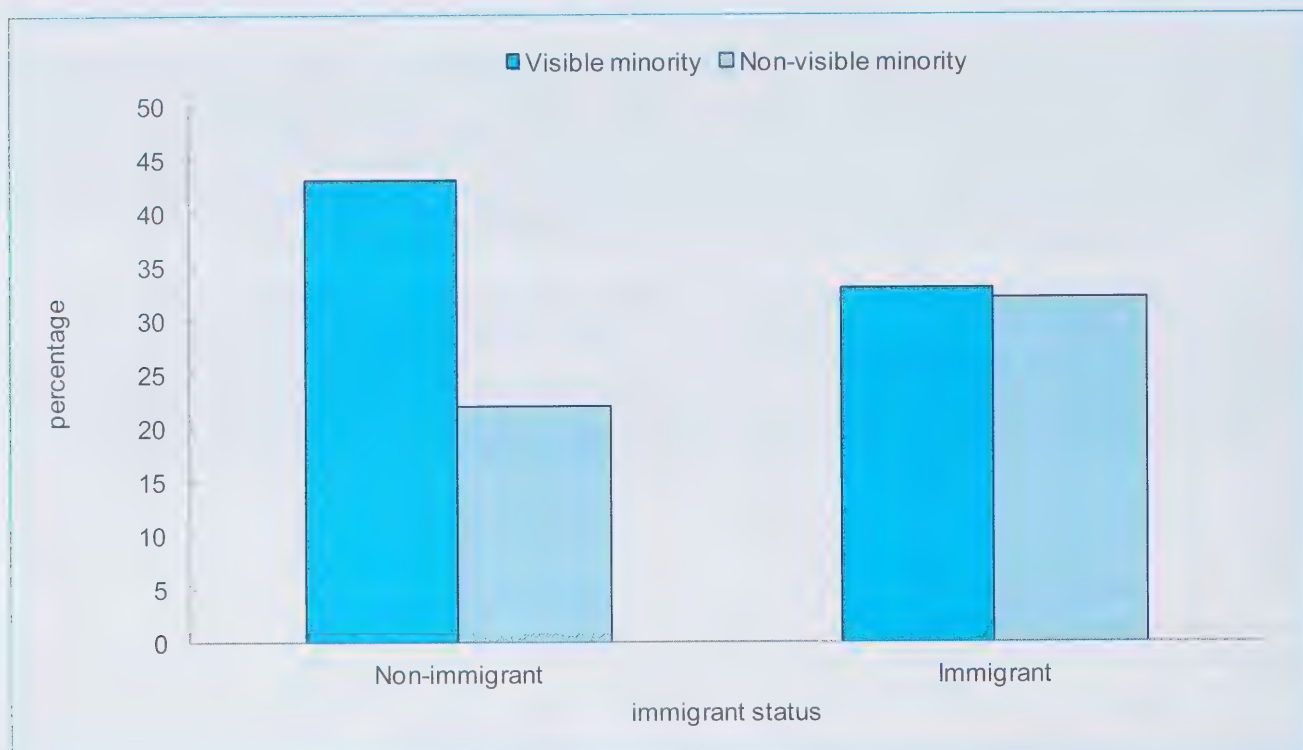
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Visible minority women who were born in Canada were more likely to have a higher education than non-visible minority women. For example, in 2006, 43% of visible minority women of core working age who were born in Canada reported having a university degree, compared to 22% of their non-visible minority counterparts (Chart 10.6).

Immigrant women in general had high educational attainment, regardless of visible minority status. In 2006, 33% of visible minority immigrant women and 32% of their non-visible minority counterparts held a university degree.

Chart 10.6

Women aged 25 to 54 with university degree, by immigrant status, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

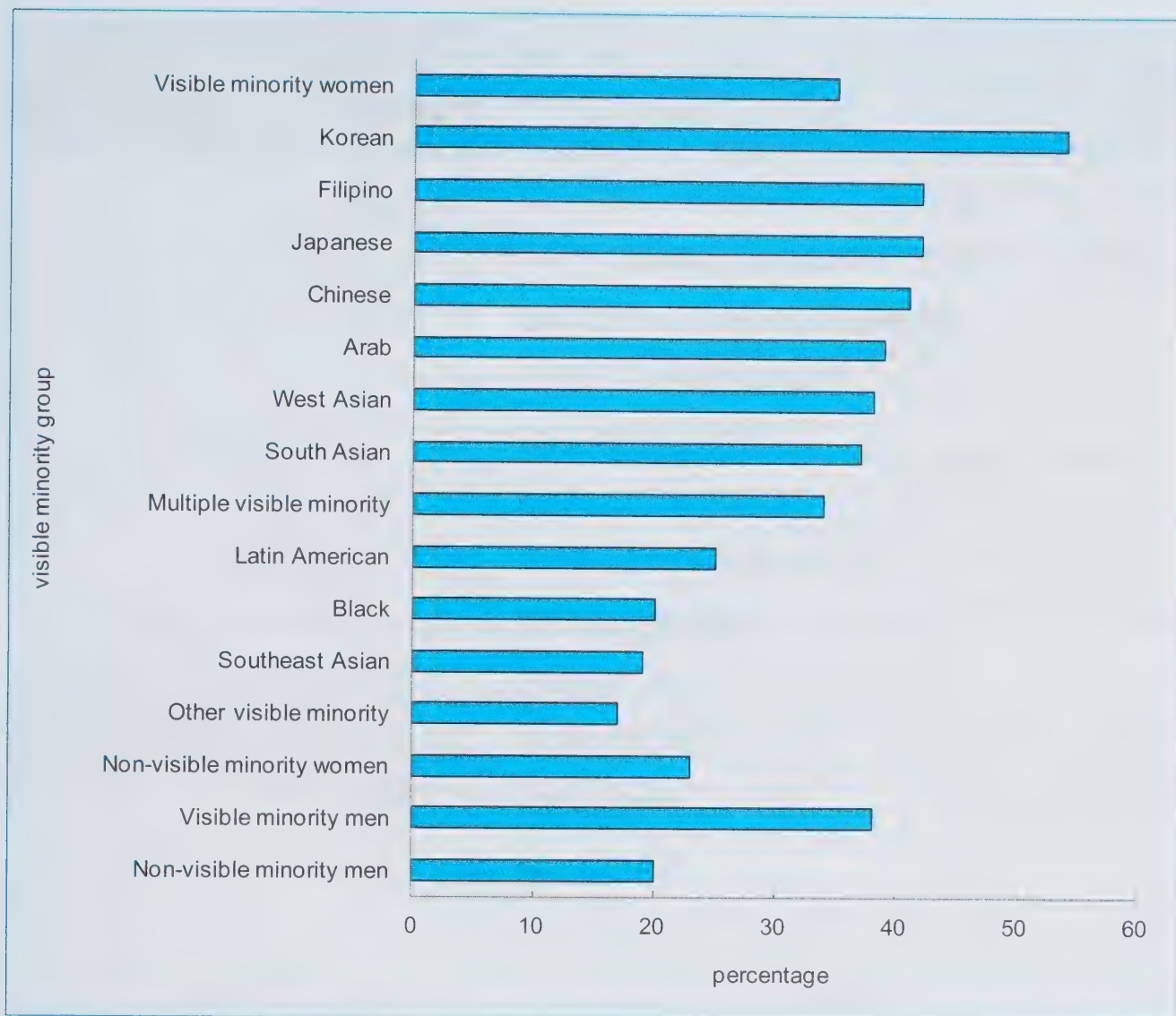
Percentage of university degree holders varies by visible minority group

Among visible minority women, Korean women were the most likely to have a university education—54% of Korean women aged 25 to 54 had a university degree in 2006 (Chart 10.7). Filipinas and Japanese women had the next highest rate of university education (42%), followed by Chinese women (41%).

At the other end of the range, 19% of Southeast Asian women and 20% of Black women held university degrees, making them fall below the average 25% rate for the total female population aged 25 to 54.

Chart 10.7

Population aged 25 to 54 with university degree, by visible minority group, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

In 2006, 30% of Southeast Asian women reported having no educational certificate, diploma or degree. Another 26% said that they had a secondary school or equivalent certificate

Black women aged 25 to 54 were the most likely (27%) to report some form of non-university postsecondary qualifications, such as a college certificate or diploma, and 21% reported that they were high school graduates.

In 2006, 28% of visible minority women aged 15 and over with postsecondary training reported that they had studied in business, management and public administration (Table 10.8). This was also the most popular field of study for non-visible minority women (27%). The second-ranking field was health, parks, recreation and fitness, for both visible minority women (19%) and non-visible minority women (22%). Another 13% of visible minority women and 12% of non-visible minority women reported that they had studied in social and behavioural sciences and law. Together, these were the top three major fields of study among both visible and non-visible minority women in 2006, accounting for about 60% of women aged 15 and over with a postsecondary training.

Table 10.8

Visible minority and non-visible minority women and men aged 15 and over with postsecondary education, by major field of study, Canada, 2006

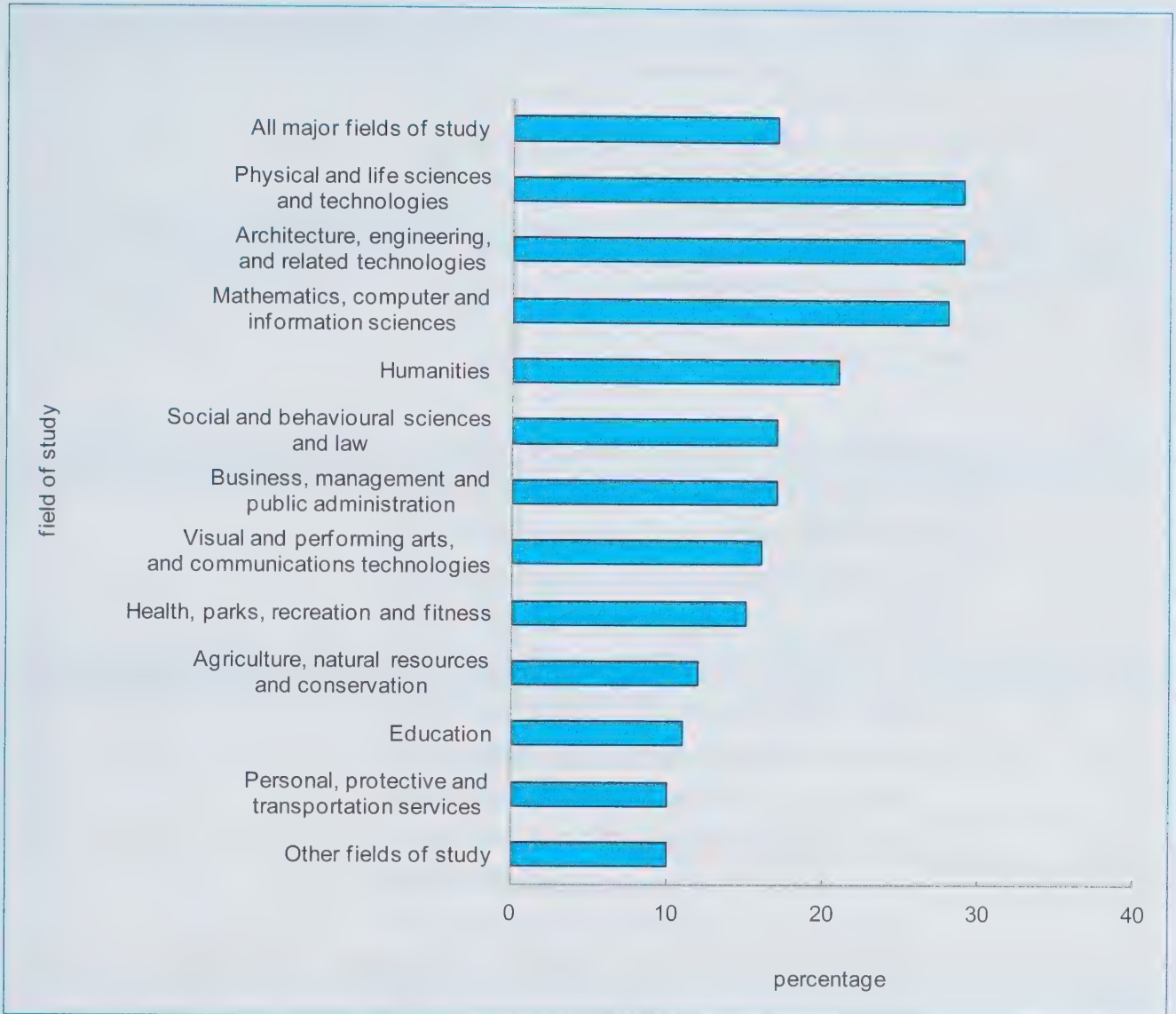
Major field of study	Non-visible minority		Visible minority	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
	percentage			
Population with a postsecondary certificate or diploma	100	100	100	100
Education	12	4	7	2
Visual and performing arts and communications technologies	4	4	4	3
Humanities	6	4	8	4
Social and behavioural sciences and law	12	7	13	8
Business, management and public administration	27	15	28	20
Physical and life sciences and technologies	3	3	5	6
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	3	5	6	10
Architecture, engineering and related technologies	3	43	6	37
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	1	3	1	2
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	22	5	19	6
Personal, protective and transportation services	6	7	3	3
Other fields of study	0	0	0	0

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

While technical or scientific fields were not among the top fields of study for women, visible minority women were more likely to have studied in them. In 2006, visible minority women made up 29% of women studying in physical and life sciences and technologies, 29% in architecture, engineering and related technologies and 28% in mathematics, computer and information sciences (Chart 10.8). In comparison, visible minority women made up 17% of all women with postsecondary training.

Chart 10.8

Visible minority women with postsecondary education in various fields of study, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Women in the four largest visible minority groups were most likely to have studied business, management and public administration or fields related to health, parks, recreation and fitness. The top field for Chinese (33%) and South Asian (25%) women was business, management and public administration while among Black (28%) and Filipino (32%) women; it was health, parks, recreation and fitness (Table 10.9).

Table 10.9

Top five major fields of study of the four largest visible minority women groups aged 15 years and over with postsecondary education, Canada, 2006

Chinese	percentage
Business, management and public administration	32.5
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	12.8
Social and behavioural sciences and law	11.3
Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	9.7
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	7.2
South Asian	
Business, management and public administration	25.3
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	15.2
Social and behavioural sciences and law	14.5
Humanities	14.1
Education	8.1
Black	
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	28.4
Business, management and public administration	27.8
Social and behavioural sciences and law	15.6
Education	5.4
Personal, protective and transportation services	5.2
Filipino	
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	32.5
Business, management and public administration	30.0
Education	9.6
Social and behavioural sciences and law	8.1
Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	4.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

The educational profile of visible minority women differed from that of their male counterparts. A higher proportion of visible minority men than women studied in scientific and technical areas. In 2006, 37% of visible minority men reported that they had studied in architecture, engineering and related technologies and 10% in mathematics, computer and information sciences. In comparison, 12% of visible minority women had studied in these two fields combined (Table 10.8).

Over three-quarters of young visible minority women attend school

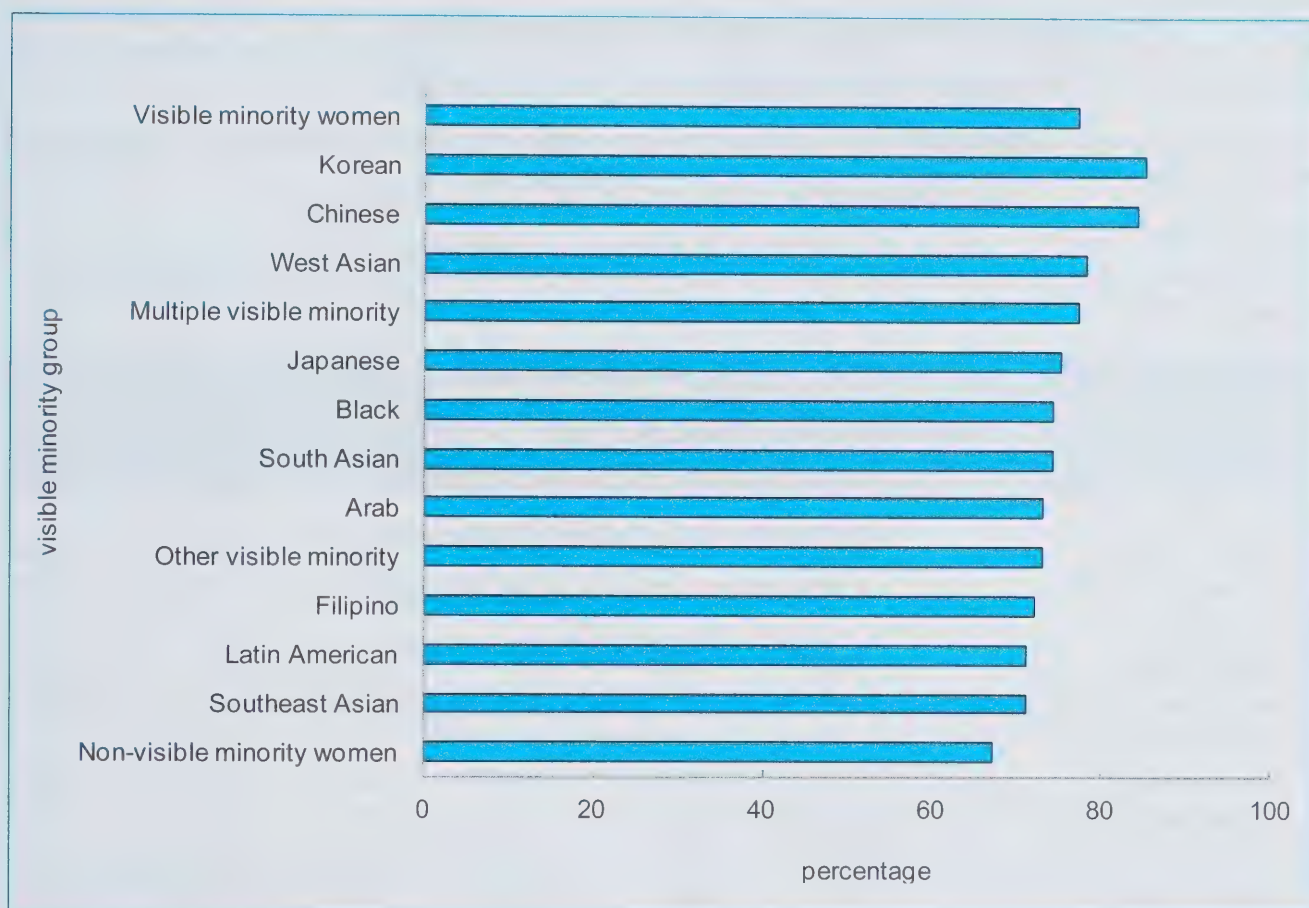
A relatively high proportion of young visible minority women attended school. From September 2005 to May 2006, 77% of visible minority women aged 15 to 24 reported that they attended school either part-time or full-time (Chart 10.9).

This rate of school attendance of young visible minority women was higher than either their non-visible minority counterparts (67%) or young visible minority men (75%).

Korean and Chinese women were the most likely to go to school among all the visible minority groups. In 2006, 85% of Korean and 84% of Chinese women aged 15 to 24 went to school from September 2005 to May 2006. Among Southeast Asian women, 71% attended school; 78% of West Asian women did.

Chart 10.9

Women aged 15 to 24 attending school part-time or full-time, by visible minority group, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

The majority of visible minority women are employed

In general, visible minority women had a slightly lower employment rate than non-visible minority women. On Census day in 2006, 56.2% of visible minority women aged 15 and over reported being part of the paid workforce in 2005, compared with 57.8% of their non-visible minority counterparts (Table 10.10).

The 68.6% employment rate for visible minority women of core working age (25 to 54) was higher than the overall rate for visible minority women of all ages. But it was almost 10 percentage points lower than for their non-visible minority counterparts (78.0%). While for non-immigrant women, the employment rate was slightly higher for visible minority women (79.7%) compared to non-visible minority women (78.4%).

The employment rates for women and men followed the same pattern in both the visible minority and non-visible minority groups: women were less likely to be employed than men. The employment gap between visible minority women (68.6%) and men (83.0%) of core working age was 14.4 percentage points.

When immigrant status was taken into account, Canadian-born visible minority women were more likely to be employed than their immigrant counterparts. Canadian-born visible minority women of core working age had an employment rate of 79.7%. This rate is 11.8 percentage points higher than that for immigrant visible minority women of the same age (67.9%), and slightly higher than the 78.4% of Canadian-born women who were not part of a visible minority (Table 10.10).

Among Canadian-born women with a university education in 2006, visible minority women had a slightly lower employment rate (84.9%) than their non-visible minority counterparts (86.8%).

Table 10.10
Employment rate of visible and non-visible minority populations, by immigrant status, Canada, 2006

Population	Total		Non-immigrant		Immigrant	
	Female	Male	Female percentage	Male	Female	Male
Age 15 and over						
Visible minority	56.2	67.3	61.1	61.3	55.9	69.6
Non-visible minority	57.8	67.7	59.5	68.8	46.3	59.8
Age 15 to 24						
Visible minority	46.0	44.5	49.7	45.1	46.1	46.9
Non-visible minority	60.1	59.7	60.4	59.8	56.8	58.0
Age 25 to 54						
Visible minority	68.6	83.0	79.7	84.1	67.9	83.7
Non-visible minority	78.0	86.5	78.4	86.4	75.1	88.0
Age 55 to 64						
Visible minority	49.0	69.0	51.9	63.3	49.1	69.3
Non-visible minority	48.9	64.0	48.4	62.5	51.3	70.7
Age 65 and over						
Visible minority	6.7	15.6	8.4	16.8	6.5	15.4
Non-visible minority	6.2	15.4	6.3	15.8	5.9	14.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

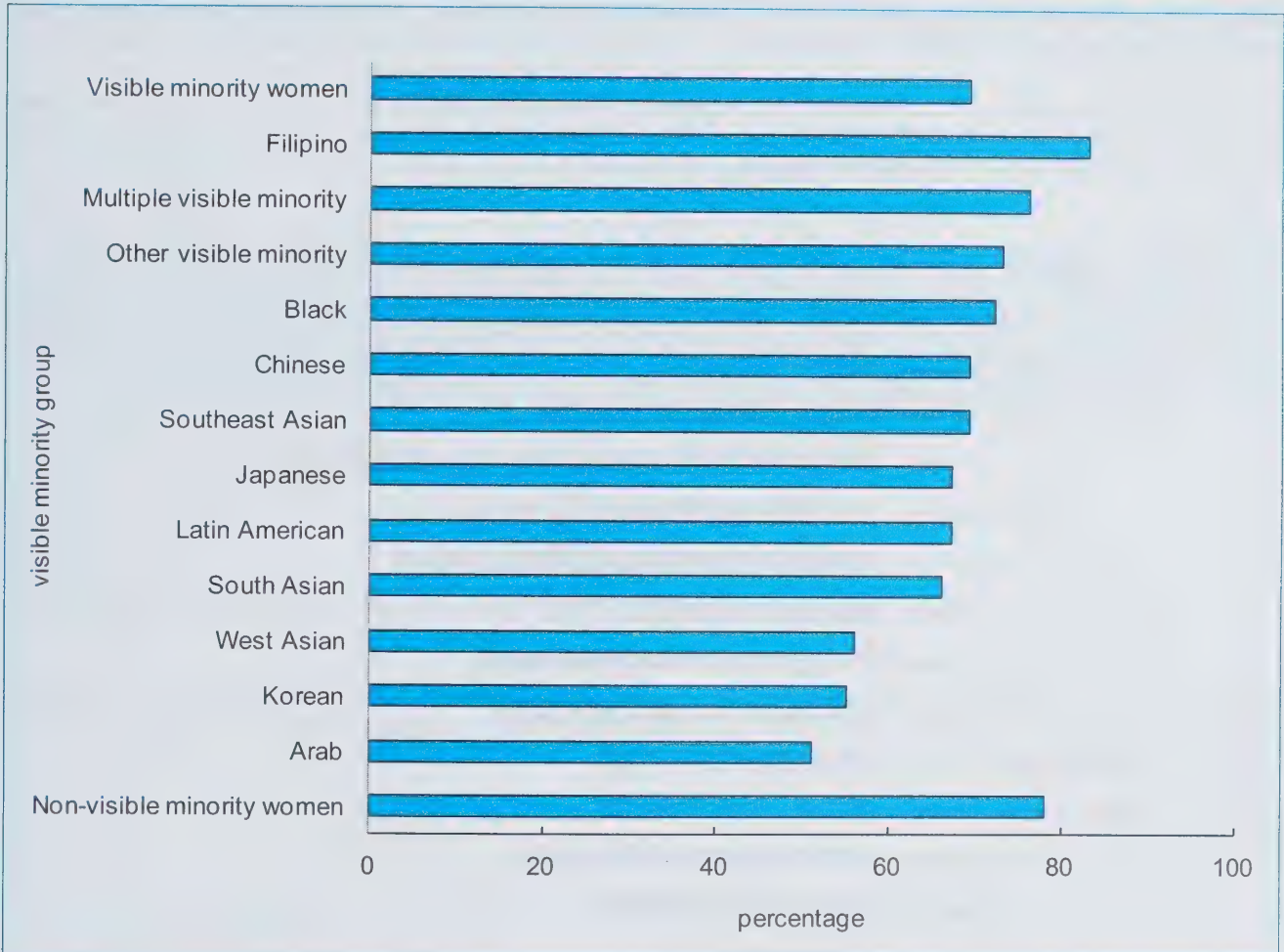
Employment rates differ by visible minority groups

Among all the visible minority groups, Filipinas were the most likely to be employed. Also, Filipinas aged 25 to 54 were more likely to be employed (83.0%), than non-visible minority women (78.0%). (Chart 10.10)

Arab, Korean and West Asian women had the lowest employment rates among the visible minority groups. In 2006, the employment gap between Arab women and non-visible minority women of core working age was 27.3 percentage points. For Korean women, the difference with non-visible minority women was 23.5 points; for West Asian women, it was 21.7.

Chart 10.10

Employment rate of women aged 25 to 54, by visible minority group, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Higher unemployment rate

Visible minority women were generally more susceptible to unemployment. In the week prior to the 2006 Census, 8.4% of the visible minority women aged 25 to 54 were in the labour force but unemployed compared with 5.0% of non-visible minority women.

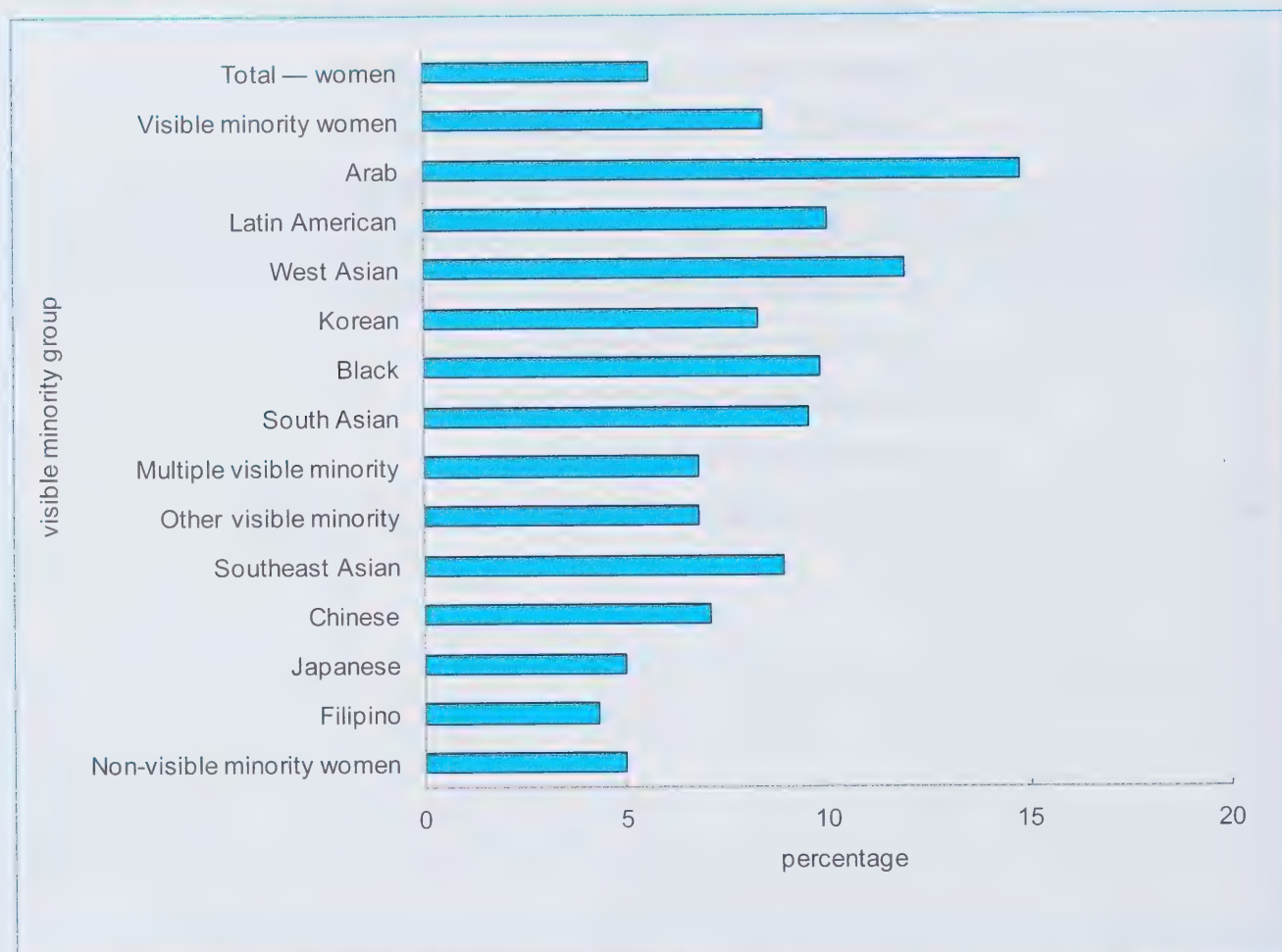
Furthermore, the unemployment rate of visible minority women (8.4%) was higher than that of visible minority men (6.2%). In fact, there was a bigger gender gap in unemployment between visible minority women and men, 2.2 percentage points, than between non-visible minority women and men, 0.1 percentage point.

Young visible minority women, like their non-visible minority counterparts, were more likely to be unemployed than those in older age categories. In 2006, 15.0% of visible minority women aged 15 to 24 were out of work, compared with 8.4% of visible minority women aged 25 to 54 and 7.1% of visible minority women aged 55 to 64. However, young visible minority women had a slightly lower unemployment rate than young visible minority men, whose rate was 16.4%.

Unemployment rates also varied from one visible minority group to another. In 2006, Arab (14.8%), West Asian (11.9%) and Latin American (10.0%) women had the highest unemployment rates in the core-working age group (Chart 10.11). Filipinas had the lowest unemployment rate (4.3%).

Chart 10.11

Unemployment rate of women aged 25 to 54, by visible minority group, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Part-time work

Women in Canada who were in the workforce in 2005 were more likely than men to work on a part-time or part-year basis, regardless of their visible minority status. During that year, 56% of visible minority women reported that they worked either part-time or part-year, compared with 52% of non-visible minority women (Table 10.11). In comparison, 47% of visible minority men and 40% of non-visible minority men reported working part-time or part of the year in 2005.

Younger and older workers were generally more likely to work part-time or part-year than workers of core-working age. This was also the case for visible minority women. In 2005, 87% of visible minority women aged 15 to 24 worked part-time or part-year, while 72% of those aged 65 and over did the same. That same year, 50% of core-working age visible minority women worked part-time or part-year.

A similar pattern emerged among non-visible minority women of core-working age: 43% of them worked part-time or part-year. The percentage of those working part-time or part-year increased for the older age groups, to 51% among 55- to 64-year-olds and 74% of seniors 65 and over.

Table 10.11

Visible minority and non-visible minority working part-time or part-year, by age group, Canada, 2006

Age group	Female		Male	
	Visible minority	Non-visible minority	Visible minority	Non-visible minority
	percentage			
15 and over	56	52	47	40
15 to 24	87	82	83	77
25 to 54	50	43	39	29
55 to 64	48	51	38	39
65 and over	72	74	62	64

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Among the visible minority groups, Korean (57%), Arab (56%) and West Asian (55%) women aged 25 to 54 were most likely to have worked part-time or part-year; Southeast Asian women were the least likely (45%).

Over one-half employed in traditional female occupations

For the most part, the occupational profile of visible minority women was similar to that of non-visible minority women. Women in both of these groups tended to be employed in jobs that were traditionally occupied by the female population. In the distribution of occupational groups, gender trumped visible minority status as a significant factor.

In 2006, 53% of visible minority women aged 25 to 54 were employed in just two occupational categories: 27% in sales and services and 26% in business, finance and administration (Table 10.12). Among their non-visible minority counterparts, about the same share, 52%, worked in these two occupational categories. In comparison, 31% of visible minority men and 24% of non-visible minority men were employed in these same categories.

The next most common occupations for visible minority women of core working age were processing, manufacturing jobs (10%), and health-related occupations (10%). In comparison, the most common occupations of visible minority men were in trades, transportation and equipment operating (19%). After this, 19% of visible minority men were employed in sales and services, 15% in natural and applied science, and 12% in business, finance and administration. In 2006, 11% of the workers in management and 11% in processing and manufacturing jobs were visible minority men.

Visible minority women of the core working age made up 16% of employment in all the occupational groups in 2006. Their share of employment was higher than that of non-visible minority women of the same age group in the following occupational categories: processing and manufacturing; natural and applied sciences; sales and services; and trades, transportation and equipment operation. However, visible minority women were less likely than their non-visible minority counterparts to be employed in jobs related to social science, education, government service and religion; art, culture, recreation and sport; management; and business, finance and administration.

Table 10.12

Visible minority and non-visible minority aged 25 to 54, by occupational group, Canada, 2006

Occupation	Female		Male	
	Visible minority	Non-visible minority	Visible minority	Non-visible minority
	percentage			
Sales and service	27	23	19	15
Business, finance and administration	26	29	12	9
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	10	3	11	7
Health	10	10	3	2
Social science, education, government service and religion	9	14	5	5
Management	7	9	11	13
Natural and applied sciences	5	3	15	11
Art, culture, recreation and sport	2	3	2	3
Trades, transport and equipment operators	2	2	19	29
Occupations unique to primary industry	1	2	2	5

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Women in the top four largest visible minority groups were most likely to be employed in business, finance and administration or in sales and services. Chinese (28%) women were most likely to have worked in business, finance and administration while Black (31%), Filipino (39%) and South Asian (28%) women were most likely to be employed in sales and services (Table 10.13).

Table 10.13

Top five occupational groups of the four largest visible minority women groups aged 15 years and over, Canada, 2006

Chinese	percentage
Business, finance and administrative	28.4
Sales and service	26.9
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	9.4
Social science, education, government service and religion	8.1
Management	7.9
South Asian	
Sales and service	28.0
Business, finance and administrative	26.6
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	12.9
Social science, education, government service and religion	9.1
Health	7.3
Black	
Sales and service	30.9
Business, finance and administrative	25.1
Health	15.7
Social science, education, government service and religion	10.4
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	6.4
Filipino	
Sales and service	38.8
Business, finance and administrative	22.2
Health	17.1
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	7.0
Social science, education, government service and religion	4.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Lower employment income

As was the case for non-visible minority women, 76% of visible minority women had their income source from employment. Employment income made up a higher proportion (83%) of total income for visible minority women of core working age (25 to 54), compared with other age groups.

Visible minority women generally earned less than non-visible minority women. In 2006, visible minority women of core working age reported median employment income in 2005 of \$23,300, compared to \$28,900 for non-visible minority women. (Data not shown)

Employment income was higher among full-time, full-year workers. Visible minority women of core working age who worked full-time, full-year in 2005 earned about \$34,000, roughly \$4,000 less than non-visible minority women (Table 10.14).

Table 10.14

Median employment income for visible minority women aged 25 to 54 years who worked full-time, full-year, by generation, Canada, 2005

Generation	Total — female population	Visible minority women	Non-visible minority women	Difference
		in Canadian dollars		
Total — Generation	37,300	33,900	37,900	4,000
1 st generation	34,900	32,600	38,500	5,900
2 nd generation	42,000	41,500	42,000	500
3 rd generation or more	37,000	39,200	37,000	-2,200

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

An earnings gap also existed between the sexes. The median employment income of visible minority women aged 25 to 54 who worked full-time; full-year was close to \$7,000 less than that of visible minority men, whose median earnings were \$40,800. This difference shows that visible minority women of core working age earned about 83% of their male counterparts' earnings (data not shown).

In 2005, Japanese women of core working age who worked full-time, full-year had the highest median employment income (\$43,000). This was about \$6,000 more than Chinese women and \$8,000 more than Black women. Korean and Latin American women had the lowest median earnings, \$28,000 and \$30,000 respectively (data not shown).

Higher incidence of low income

Visible minority women were more likely to be in a low income situation than non-visible minority women. Of the visible minority women in an economic family, 28% were below the low-income cut-off before tax, compared with 14% of non-visible minority women.

The incidence of low income for visible minority women (28%) was slightly higher than for their male counterparts (27%).

Government transfers helped reduce the number of individuals in low-income situations and were reflected in low-income rates calculated after tax. The low-income rate for visible minority women dropped to 22% after tax, compared with 10% for non-visible minority women.

When immigrant status was taken into account, 22% of visible minority immigrant women were in low-income situations, using after tax calculations, compared with 19% of Canadian-born visible minority women. (Table 10.15)

Table 10.15
Low-income for women in economic families, by visible minority and immigrant status, Canada, 2005

Low income	Total population			Non-immigrants			Immigrants		
	Total Both sexes			Total Both sexes			Total Both sexes		
	Female	Male	percentage	Female	Male	percentage	Female	Male	percentage
Low income after tax									
Total population	11.4	12.0	10.7	9.7	10.3	9.1	16.7	17.2	16.1
Visible minority	21.8	22.2	21.5	18.3	18.7	17.9	21.8	22.1	21.5
Non-visible minority	9.3	10.0	8.6	9.1	9.7	8.4	10.5	11.2	9.7
Low income before tax									
Total population	15.3	16.5	14.1	13.3	14.5	12.1	22.0	22.9	20.9
Visible minority	27.8	28.3	27.3	23.9	24.4	23.4	27.9	28.3	27.5
Non-visible minority	12.9	14.2	11.6	12.6	13.8	11.3	14.8	16.3	13.1

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Earnings gap disappears among the second and third generation or more

While an earnings disparity existed between all visible minority women and all their non-visible minority counterparts, it disappeared when considering only women born in Canada.

In 2005, visible minority women of core working age who worked full-time, full-year had median earnings of \$34,000, about \$4,000 less than non-visible minority women (Table 10.14). This gap existed mainly among first-generation visible minority women. In 2005, first-generation visible minority women aged 25 to 54 working full-time, full-year had median earnings of \$32,600, about \$5,900 less than similar non-visible minority women.

Labour market outcomes improved among second-generation visible minority women of core working age. Their median earnings in 2005 were about \$41,500, slightly less than the median earnings of \$42,000 for second-generation non-visible minority women.

The median earnings of third-generation visible minority women, \$39,200, were higher than both first generation visible minority and non-visible minority women as well as women of at least three generations in Canada, \$37,000.

The earnings outcomes of the second-generation visible minority women, like their employment rates were the result of their high educational attainment.²³³ First-generation visible minority women, who came as immigrants, included a high proportion of women with a university degree. They generally had to deal with more challenges in the labour market, especially among those who were recent immigrants to Canada²³⁴ as their foreign work experience and credentials may not have been directly transferable to the Canadian economy. As a whole, second-generation visible minority women had more positive labour market outcomes than their immigrant parents or grandparents.²³⁵

233. Picot, Garnett and Feng Hou. 2011. *Seeking Success in Canada and the United States: The Determinants of Labour Market Outcomes Among the Children of Immigrants*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11F0019M. Ottawa, Ontario. Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series, no. 331. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=11F0019MWE2011331&lang=eng> (accessed April 15, 2011)

234. Plante, Johanne. 2010. *Characteristics and Labour Market Outcomes of Internationally-educated Immigrants*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 81-595-M. Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics Research papers, no. 84. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=81-595-M2010084&lang=eng> (accessed January 13, 2011)

235. Palameta, Boris. October 2007. "Economic Integration of Immigrants' Children." *Perspectives on Labour and Income*. Vol. 8, no. 10. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-001-XIE. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=75-001-X200711010372&lang=eng> (accessed May 3, 2011)

Perceived experience of discrimination

According to the 2009 General Social Survey (GSS), visible minorities, regardless of gender, more often reported experiencing discrimination or unfair treatment than non-visible minorities. One-quarter of both visible minority sexes in Canada reported discrimination or unfair treatment during the five years preceding the survey in 2009. In comparison, 13% of non-visible minority people reported discrimination or unfair treatment during the same period.

The most common reasons given as the basis of the experience of discrimination or unfair treatment were "ethnicity or culture" and "race or colour". Among visible minority women aged 15 and over, 17% reported that they were discriminated against or treated unfairly because of their race or colour and 17% said it was due to their ethnicity or culture (Table 10.16). These two reasons were each reported by about 3% of non-visible minority women.

Language was the third-most common reason behind their experience, reported by about 9% of visible minority women compared with 2% of non-visible minority women.

Table 10.16
Canadians aged 15 and over who reported experiencing discrimination or unfair treatment in Canada in last five years, 2005 to 2009

Basis of discrimination	Women		Men	
	Visible minorities	Non-visible minorities	Visible minorities	Non-visible minorities
	percentage			
Sex	7.0	6.8	3.4 ^E	2.2
Ethnicity or culture	16.9	3.2	18.0	3.8
Race or colour	17.3	2.8	17.0	3.6
Physical appearance	5.9	4.3	5.9 ^E	3.1
Religion	4.8 ^E	2.4	6.2 ^E	1.6
Sexual orientation	x	0.9	x	0.8 ^E
Age	3.8 ^E	3.9	3.6 ^E	2.6
Disability	x	1.2	x	1.1
Language	9.1	2.0	6.6	2.5
Some other reason	x	0.8	x	0.3 ^E

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2009.

Although the percentages varied by gender and visible minority status, the three most common situations of discrimination or unfair treatment for all the GSS respondents were in the workplace or when applying for a job or promotion; in a store, bank or restaurant; and on the street (Table 10.17).

Nevertheless, 94% of the visible minority population and 96% of the non-visible minority population said that they felt they lived in a welcoming community.

Table 10.17

Canadians aged 15 and over who reported experiencing discrimination or unfair treatment in Canada in last five years, by type of situation, 2005 to 2009

Type of situation	Female		Male	
	Visible minorities	Non-visible minorities	Visible minorities	Non-visible minorities
	percentage			
On the streets	33.8	27.1	43.2	33.6
In a store, bank or restaurant	44.3	40.9	38.1	29.4
At work or when applying for a job or promotion	50.2	48.8	49.3	41.5
When dealing with the police or courts	8.2 ^E	5.8	18.0 ^E	5.8
On a bus, train, airplane, subway, light rapid transit, ferry, etc.	25.6	12.2	21.2	11.4
Attending school or classes	25.8	15.2	16.4 ^E	16.0
When looking for a place to live or when renting or buying a home	7.6 ^E	10.3	13.7 ^E	5.3 ^E
When participating in sports or getting involved in a sports organization	x	7.0	5.6 ^E	7.9 ^E
When dealing with public hospitals or health care workers	19.5 ^E	13.3	9.5 ^E	6.0
When crossing the border into Canada	18.5 ^E	6.1	23.6 ^E	4.2 ^E
Other situation	6.5 ^E	9.7	x	9.8

Note: The total included only those who answered 'yes' to any one of the discrimination questions

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2009.

Definitions

The *Employment Equity Act* defines visible minorities as 'persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.' Under this definition, regulations specify the following groups as visible minorities: Chinese, South Asians, Blacks, Arabs, West Asians, Filipinos, Southeast Asians, Latin Americans, Japanese, Koreans and other visible minority groups, such as Pacific Islanders. For details on each of the groups that make up the visible minority population, see the *Visible Minority Population and Population Group Reference Guide, 2006 Census*. Catalogue no. 97-562-GWE2006003.

Immigrant refers to a person who is or has ever been a landed immigrant. A landed immigrant or permanent resident is a person who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants are either Canadian citizens by naturalization (the citizenship process) or permanent residents (landed immigrants) under Canadian legislation. Some immigrants have resided in Canada for a number of years, while others have arrived recently. Although a small number of immigrants are born in Canada, most immigrants are born outside Canada. Therefore, in this study, the term "born in Canada" is occasionally used to describe non-immigrants, in order to clarify the text.

Recent immigrants (also known as "newcomers") are landed immigrants who came to Canada up to five years prior to a given census year. For the 2006 Census, recent immigrants are landed immigrants who arrived in Canada between January 1, 2001 and Census Day, May 16, 2006. Similarly, recent immigrants in the 2001 Census were newcomers at the time of the 2001 Census, i.e., they came to Canada between January 1, 1996 and Census Day, May 15, 2001.

Non-permanent residents are people from another country who had a Work or Study Permit, or who were refugee claimants at the time of the census, and family members living in Canada with them.

Permanent residents, defined by The *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, fall into three basic classes: Economic, Family and Protected Persons. Permanent residents are persons who have not become Canadian citizens, but have been authorized to live and work in Canada indefinitely, provided that they meet residency requirements and do not lose their status by reason of serious criminality, security, human rights violations, organized crime or misrepresentation.

Temporary residents are foreign workers, international students and visitors who gain temporary entry by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Note: The concepts of permanent residents and temporary residents are used when analysing administrative data from the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. These are different from the concepts of immigrants and non-permanent residents used in the Canadian census.

Generation status indicates for how many generations a person and their family have been in Canada. It is derived from place of birth of respondent, place of birth of father and place of birth of mother and it pertains only to the population aged 15 and older. A person is defined as either 'first generation,' 'second generation' or 'third generation or more,' as follows:

- **first generation:** Persons born outside Canada. For the most part, these are people who are now, or have ever been, landed immigrants in Canada. Also included in the first generation are a small number of people born outside Canada to parents who are Canadian citizens by birth. In addition, the first generation includes people who are non-permanent residents.
- **second generation:** Persons born in Canada with at least one parent born outside Canada. This includes: (a) persons born in Canada with both parents born outside Canada and (b) persons born in Canada with one parent born in Canada and one parent born outside Canada (these persons may have grandparents born inside or outside Canada as well).
- **third generation or more:** Persons born in Canada with both parents born in Canada (these persons may have grandparents born inside or outside Canada as well).

Census metropolitan area is an area consisting of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major urban core. A census metropolitan area must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core.

Attendance at school refers to the attendance and the type of school attended during the nine-month period between September 2005 and May 16, 2006. An individual's attendance could be either full time or part time (day or evening), even if the individual dropped out after registration. Attendance was counted only for courses which could be used as credits towards a certificate, diploma or degree from a recognized educational institution (elementary or secondary school, registered apprenticeship programs, trade schools, colleges, CEGEPs and universities).

Major field of study refers to the predominant discipline or area of learning or training of a person's highest postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree. For more information on the classification of the fields, refer to *2006 Census Dictionary*, Catalogue no. 92-566-XWE.

Occupation refers to the kind of work persons were doing during the reference week, as determined by their kind of work and the description of the main activities in their job. If the person did not have a job during the week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to enumeration (May 16, 2006), the data relate to the job of longest duration since January 1, 2005. Persons with two or more jobs were to report the information for the job at which they worked the most hours. For more information on the classification of the occupational group, refer to *2006 Census Dictionary*, Catalogue no. 92-566-XWE.

Employment rate is the number of people for a particular group (age, sex, marital status, geographical area, etc.) employed in the week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to Census Day (May 16, 2006), expressed as a percentage of the total population in that particular group.

Unemployment rate is the unemployed people in a particular group (age, sex, marital status, geographical area, etc.) expressed as a percentage of the labour force in that group, in the week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to Census Day (May 16, 2006).

Employment income or earnings refers to total income received by persons 15 years of age and over during calendar year 2005 as wages and salaries, net income from a non-farm unincorporated business and/or professional practice, and/or net farm self-employment income.

Low-income cut-offs (LICOs) are income thresholds, determined by analysing family expenditure data, below which families will devote a larger share of income to the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than the average family would. To reflect differences in the costs of necessities among different community and family sizes, LICOs are defined for five categories of community size and seven of family size. Low-income cut-offs before and after tax can all be used.

Work activity refers to the number of weeks in which a person worked for pay or in self-employment in 2005 at all jobs held, even if only for a few hours, and whether these weeks were mostly full-time (30 hours or more per week) or mostly part-time (1 to 29 hours per week).

The term 'full-year full-time workers' refers to persons 15 years of age and over who worked 49 to 52 weeks (mostly full time) in 2005 for pay or in self-employment.

Chapter 11

Senior Women

by Anne Milan and Mireille Vézina

Canada, like many industrialized countries, has an aging population. The continued growth in the number of women and men aged 65 years and over, with women representing the majority of older people, will have implications for many areas such as health services, caregiving, housing and pensions. This chapter provides an overview of senior women in the population, analysed in a historical context where appropriate. It examines their socio-demographic characteristics, including life expectancy, diversity, family and living arrangements, health and well-being, labour force participation and income.

Population aging continues

Canada had 4.8 million people aged 65 years and over on July 1, 2010 (Table 11.1). Of this senior population, 2.7 million, or 56%, were women, accounting for 16% of the total female population. According to the medium-growth scenario of the most recent population projections,²³⁶ population aging in Canada is expected to accelerate from 2011 to 2031.²³⁷ During this time, the large cohort of baby boomers born between 1946 and 1965, and aged 45 to 64 years in 2010, will reach their senior years. By 2031, projections show 9.6 million people would be aged 65 years and over, of whom 5.1 million would be women (53% of seniors and 24% of the total female population).²³⁸ Population aging would continue in the years following 2031, but at a slower pace. By 2061, the last year of the projection period, there could be 13.4 million seniors in Canada, including 7.1 million women, comprising 53% of the senior population and about 27% of the overall female population.

In addition to the aging of the baby boom generation, population aging in Canada is largely the result of two other factors: a low fertility rate and higher life expectancy. First, the total fertility rate has been in the range of 1.5 to 1.7 children per woman, on average, over the last 30 years—below the replacement level of 2.1. Second, Canadians' life expectancy has increased substantially during the past century. Consequently, more people are reaching age 65 and surviving longer into their senior years.

236. Statistics Canada. 2010. *Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2009 to 2036*. Catalogue no. 91-520-X.

237. Other scenarios are available, but population aging occurs in all scenarios.

238. Population projections in this chapter are based on the medium-growth projection scenario (M1), Demography Division, Custom Tabulation.

Table 11.1
Population aged 65 years and over, by sex, Canada, 1921 to 2061

Year	Women	Men thousands	Total	Women aged 65 years and over as a percentage of total female population	Women as a percentage of population aged 65 years and over
				percentage	
1921	205.3	215.0	420.2	4.8	48.8
1931	281.5	294.6	576.1	5.6	48.9
1941	376.9	390.9	767.8	6.7	49.1
1951	535.0	551.3	1,086.3	7.7	49.2
1956	621.7	622.2	1,243.9	7.8	50.0
1961	717.0	674.1	1,391.2	7.9	51.5
1966	823.0	716.6	1,539.5	8.3	53.5
1971 ¹	972.1	790.3	1,762.4	8.9	55.2
1976 ¹	1,135.5	887.1	2,022.6	9.7	56.1
1981 ¹	1,360.0	1,017.0	2,377.0	10.9	57.2
1986 ¹	1,589.1	1,147.5	2,736.6	12.1	58.1
1991 ¹	1,864.4	1,348.0	3,212.5	13.2	58.0
1996 ¹	2,065.4	1,513.8	3,579.3	13.8	57.7
2001 ¹	2,238.3	1,684.0	3,922.3	14.3	57.1
2006 ¹	2,438.5	1,886.3	4,324.8	14.8	56.4
2010 ¹	2,681.6	2,138.0	4,819.6	15.6	55.6
Projections					
2011	2,760.3	2,214.1	4,974.4	15.9	55.5
2016	3,260.0	2,696.3	5,956.3	17.7	54.7
2021	3,844.7	3,246.8	7,091.5	19.9	54.2
2026	4,506.7	3,876.8	8,383.5	22.2	53.8
2031	5,135.2	4,475.5	9,610.7	24.2	53.4
2036	5,538.1	4,841.5	10,379.6	25.0	53.4
2041	5,838.2	5,101.1	10,939.3	25.4	53.4
2046	6,130.4	5,355.6	11,486.0	25.7	53.4
2051	6,434.0	5,649.7	12,083.7	26.0	53.2
2056	6,756.8	5,979.9	12,736.7	26.4	53.0
2061	7,086.2	6,312.1	13,398.3	26.7	52.9

1. Estimates adjusted for net census under coverage.

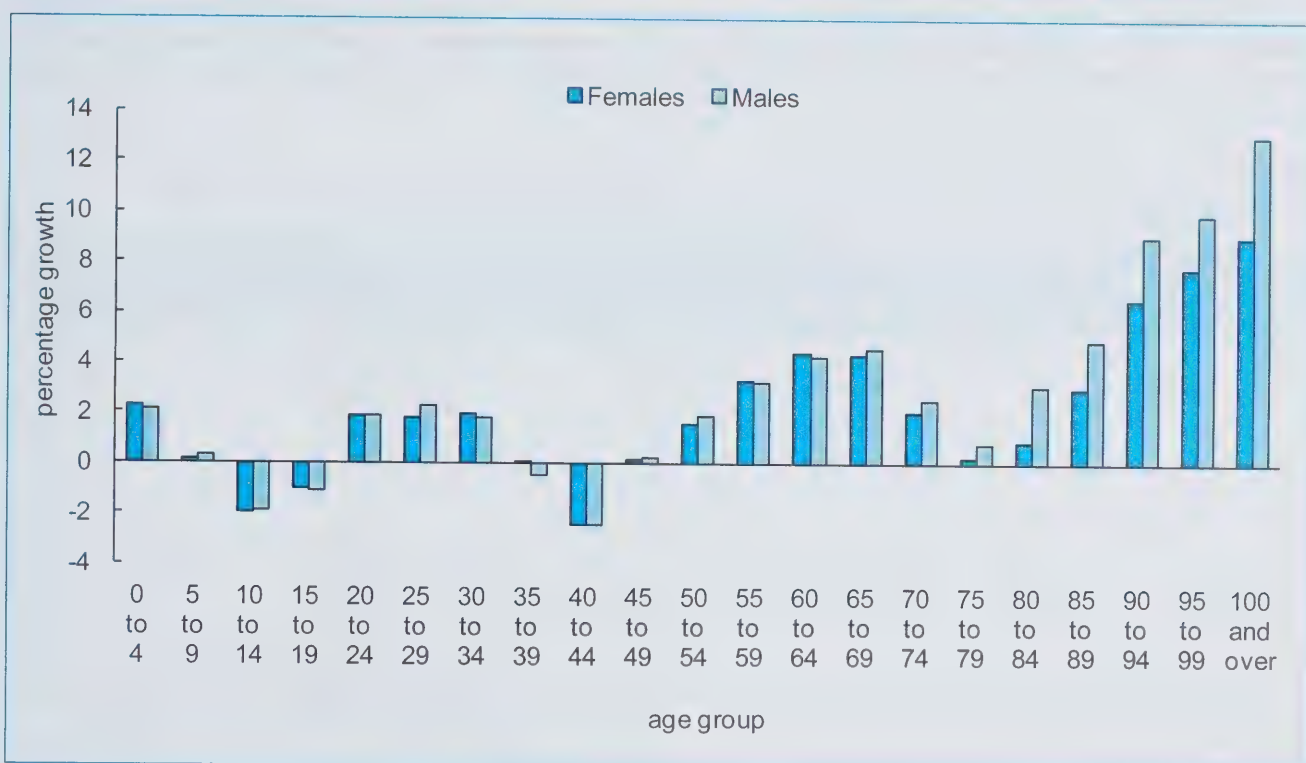
Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1921 to 1966; and Demography Division, 1971 to 2006; and *Annual Demographic Estimates: Canada, Provinces and Territories*. Catalogue no. 91-215-X, 2010; and Demography Division, Custom Tabulation based on medium-growth projection scenario (M1), 2011 to 2061.

As of July 1, 2010, 1.3 million people were aged 80 and over, of whom 839,900, or 63%, were women. According to the most recent population projections, this age group would have 1.6 million women by 2031, and 2.9 million women by 2061. On July 1, 2010, Canada had about 6,500 centenarians—people aged 100 years and over—and about 5,200, or four-fifths, were women. Less than a decade earlier, in 2001, there were 3,400 centenarians: 2,900 were women, or 84% of this age group. The number of female centenarians could reach 14,000 by 2031 and 60,700 by 2061, still comprising close to four-fifths of the 17,600 and 78,300 centenarians in each respective year.

From July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, population percentage growth of the baby boomers was high, but that of the oldest old was even higher (Chart 11.1). In fact, centenarians had the highest growth of all age groups during the 2009/2010 period, although the 9.0% growth of female centenarians was slower than that of male centenarians, at 13%. The percentage growth of people in their nineties was also high, again with slower growth for women than men.

Chart 11.1

Percentage growth, by age group and sex, Canada, July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010



Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.

Increasing life expectancy

The primary reason for the greater number of older women than older men is women's longer life expectancy. According to the age-specific mortality rates observed in 2007, a baby girl could expect to live 83.0 years; a baby boy, 78.5 years.²³⁹ Canadian women who were aged 65 in 2007 could expect to live another 21.3 years; men of that age, an additional 18.3 years (Table 11.2). Life expectancy has been steadily rising based on the data recorded since 1921. Even women who were aged 80 in 2007 could expect to live another 10.2 years; men of that age, another 8.5 years.

The gap, however, between women's and men's life expectancies has been narrowing since the late 1970s. This might explain the more rapid growth of men compared with women in the oldest age groups. If this trend continues in the coming decades, it may eventually produce a greater balance in the number of senior women and men. Women aged 65 years and over made up about 58% of the total senior population from about the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s; by the early 2030s, their share is projected to decrease to 53%. This trend has implications: for example, both spouses surviving longer may allow for mutual informal care and support.

Among countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), women's life expectancy, based on 2006-to-2007 data, was higher than Canada's in Japan (86 years), France, Switzerland, Italy, Spain and Australia (about 84 years).²⁴⁰ A life expectancy at birth at or about 83 years for women was reported in some other OECD countries: Finland, Sweden, Austria, Norway, Iceland, Germany and South Korea.

Table 11.2

Remaining life expectancy of women and men at age 65, Canada, 1921 to 2007

Year	Women	Men	Total
		years	
1921	13.6	13.0	13.3
1931	13.7	13.0	13.3
1941	14.1	12.8	13.4
1951	15.0	13.3	14.1
1961	16.1	13.6	14.8
1971	17.6	13.8	15.7
1981	18.9	14.6	16.8
1991	19.9	15.7	18.0
2001	20.5	17.0	18.8
2007 ^p	21.3	18.3	19.9

^p preliminary

Note: 1921 to 1981 data are based on life expectancy for those aged 65 to 70 years. The year 1921 excludes Quebec and 1921 to 1941 excludes Newfoundland and Labrador.

Sources: Statistics Canada, D. Nagnur. 1986. *Longevity and Historical Life Tables: 1921-1981 (Abridged) Canada and the Provinces*. Catalogue no. 89-506, 1921 to 1981. *Life Tables, Canada, Provinces and Territories*. Catalogue no. 84-537, 1991 and 2001. Demography Division, 2007.

Despite the relatively high life expectancy of senior women overall in Canada, there is some variation. In the territories, which have a high Aboriginal population, life expectancy for women at age 65 is more than two years lower than in the country as a whole.²⁴¹ A lower life expectancy and, to an even greater extent, higher fertility, contribute to a younger Aboriginal population compared with the general Canadian population. Consequently, the demographic situation of the Aboriginal population is unique in Canada. While 14% of the total female population in Canada was composed of senior women in 2006, this was the case for 5.1% of the female

239. Life expectancy data for 2007 are preliminary.

240. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2010. "Life expectancy at birth: Women". *OECD Factbook*, 2010.

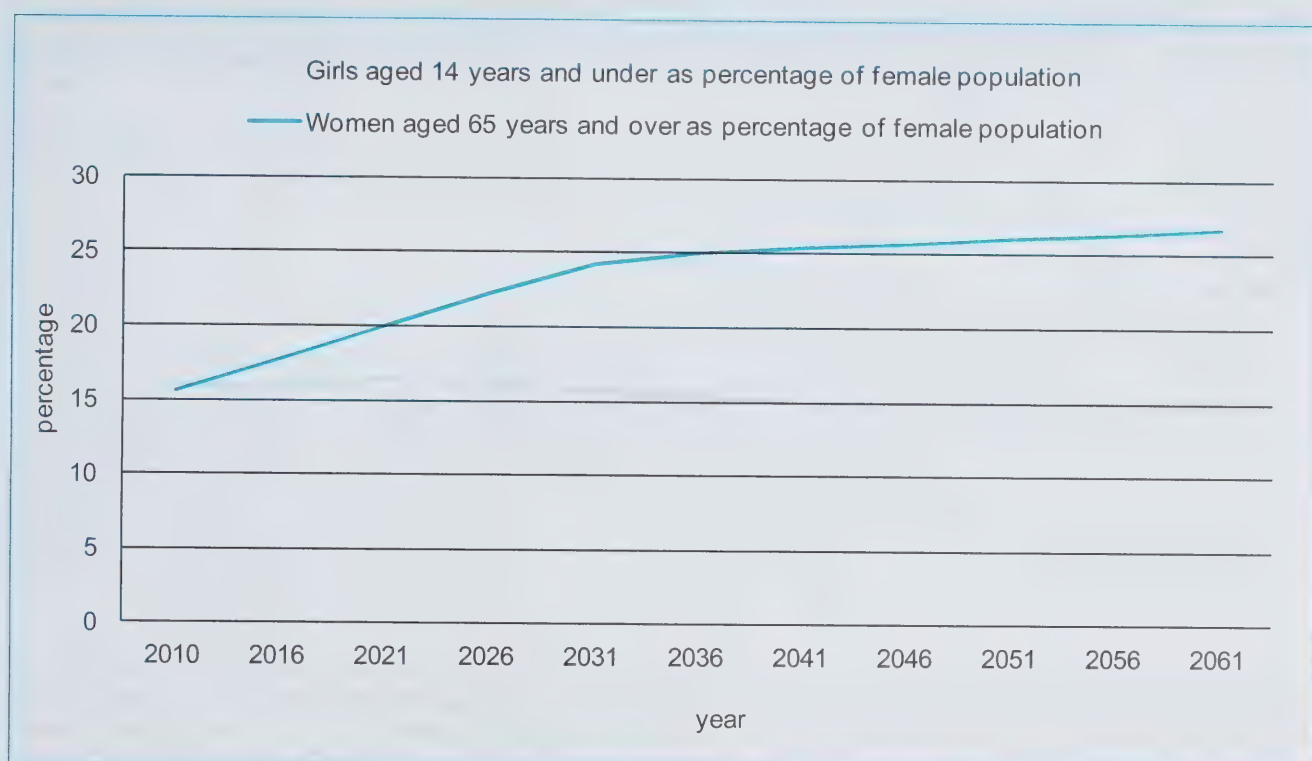
241. Statistics Canada. 2010. *Deaths 2007*. Catalogue no. 84F0211X.

population with an Aboriginal identity. In contrast, the Aboriginal female population had a much higher share of girls aged 14 and under (28%) than did the overall female population (17%).

The proportion of women aged 65 years and over, relative to the total female population, will increase in the coming years, while that of girls aged 14 years and under will remain fairly stable (Chart 11.2). In fact, the share of women aged 65 and over (15.9%) is projected to surpass that of girls aged 14 and under (15.8%) for the first time in Canadian history as soon as 2011. The gap would continue to widen to about 12 percentage points in 2061, the end of the most recent projection period. At that point, senior women would make up 27% of the total female population; girls aged 14 and under, 15%.

Chart 11.2

Girls aged 14 years and under and women aged 65 years and over as a percentage of the female population, Canada, 2010 to 2061



Sources: Statistics Canada. 2010. *Annual Demographic Estimates: Canada, Provinces and Territories*, Catalogue no. 91-215-X. Projections based on medium-growth scenario (M1), Demography Division, Custom Tabulation, 2011 to 2061.

Diversity of senior women²⁴²

The diverse nature of senior women is revealed in the data on visible minority status and immigrant status. Females who belonged to visible minority groups had a younger age structure than the overall female population. In 2006, 14% of the total female population were aged 65 and over, while 7.8% of females belonging to a visible minority group were seniors. The percentage of girls aged 14 years and under in the female visible minority population was higher (22%) than in the total female population (17%).

242. This section is based on the 2006 Census; therefore, one person in the household might have completed the census questionnaire for all household members, particularly for children. Consequently, while aspects of diversity such as visible minority status or immigrant status are often referred to in the census as self-reported, they may be reported by the respondent on behalf of individual household members.

According to the 2006 Census, 8.9% of senior women belonged to a visible minority group in 2006 compared with 21% of girls aged 14 years and under. About 17% of all women aged 15 to 64 reported a visible minority status in 2006. However, among the visible minority population, particular differences emerge by visible minority group according to age (Table 11.3). Senior women who belonged to the visible minority population were proportionally more likely to be Chinese (35%) compared with girls aged 14 years and under (19%). In contrast, women aged 65 years and over who were Black were proportionally fewer, at 13%, than were girls aged 14 and under, at 19%. Fewer senior women belonged to multiple visible minority groups (1.6%) compared with girls aged 14 and under (4.0%).

Table 11.3
Females belonging to visible minority groups, by age group, Canada, 2006

Visible minority group	14 years and under	15 to 64 years percentage	65 years and over
Total visible minority population	100.0	100.0	100.0
Chinese	19.0	24.7	34.8
South Asian	26.2	23.5	22.8
Black	19.5	14.8	13.1
Filipino	7.7	9.5	8.3
Southeast Asian	4.7	4.8	4.1
Latin American	5.3	6.4	3.9
Japanese	1.3	1.7	3.1
Arab	6.1	4.5	2.9
Korean	2.2	3.1	2.1
West Asian	2.7	3.1	2.0
Multiple visible minority groups	4.0	2.3	1.6
Other visible minority	1.3	1.5	1.4

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

The immigrant female population had an older age structure than the overall female population.²⁴³ About 20% of immigrant females were aged 65 years and over, while 5.3% were girls aged 14 years and under. Proportionally more senior women were immigrants in 2006 compared with younger women—29% of women aged 65 years and over were immigrants, compared with 22% of women aged 15 to 64 and 6.3% of girls 14 years and under. More than three-fifths (63%) of senior immigrant women were born in Europe—including the United Kingdom (18%) and Italy (11%)—followed by Asia and the Middle East (23%), Central America, South America, the Caribbean and Bermuda (6.7%) and Africa (2.6%). About 4.4% of senior immigrant women were born in the United States. Most senior immigrant women had been in Canada for many years while 3.2% arrived in the 2001-to-2006 period.

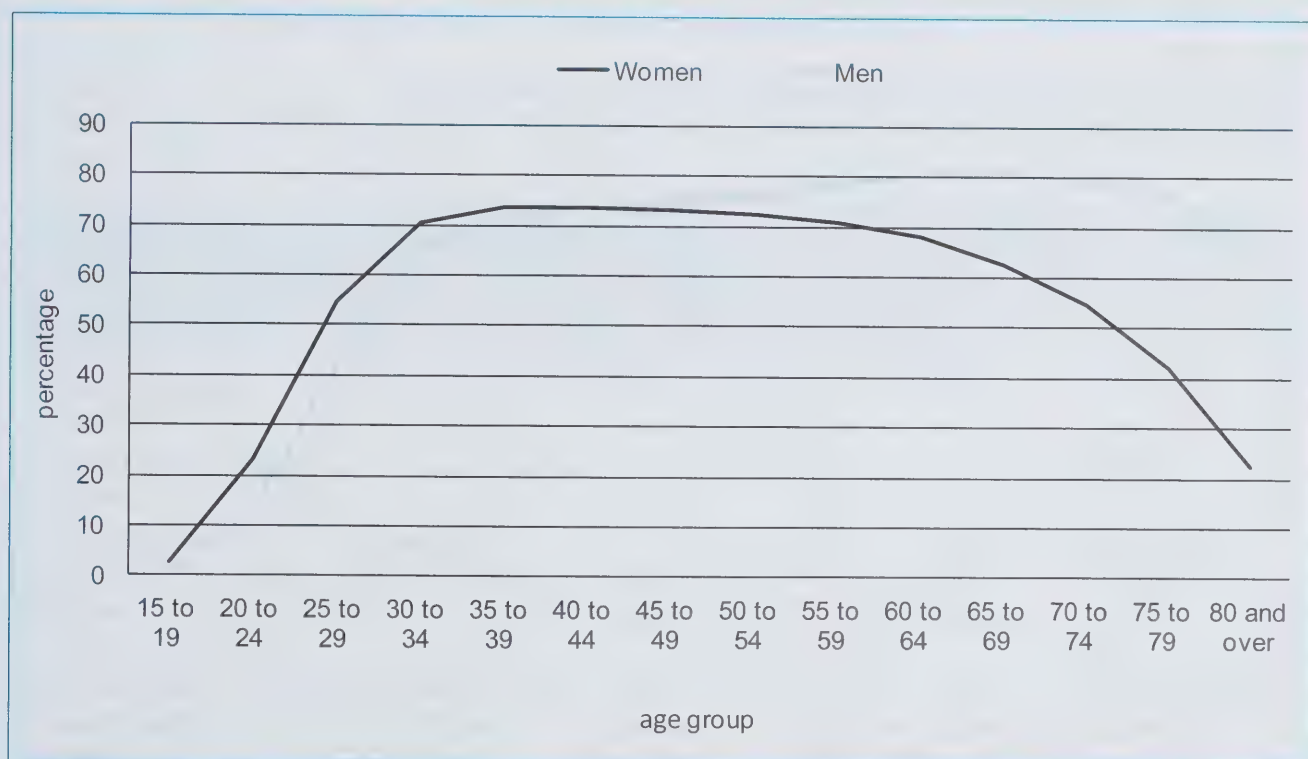
243. In the context of the census, the immigrant population includes some people who have resided in Canada for many years, while others have arrived recently. These data include a small number of immigrants born in Canada and exclude non-permanent residents.

Many senior women live in a family context²⁴⁴

Most senior women live in private households; many live as part of a couple. Of women 65 years and over, 46% lived as part of a couple in 2006, as did 76% of senior men. From age 15 to 39, a higher proportion of women were in couples than men, since women tend to be slightly younger than their spouses or partners (Chart 11.3). By their early forties, roughly equal proportions of women and men were living as part of a couple (73% each), but the disparity began to widen from age 45 to 49 onward: fewer women in couples than men reflected not only the age pattern of union formation but also women's higher life expectancy. Although this pattern continued in 2006, it was less pronounced than in the past as recent gains in longevity have been occurring more rapidly for men. The increased proportion of women who were spouses or partners is particularly evident among women in their early seventies. In 1981, 43% of women aged 70 to 74 were part of couples, increasing to 55% in 2006. The percentage of women aged 75 and over with spouses or partners advanced from 23% in 1981 to 31% in 2006. The percentage of men aged 70 to 74 who were part of couples increased from 77% in 1981 to 79% in 2006. Among men aged 75 and over, the corresponding increase was from 65% to 71%. More seniors in couples can be at least partly attributed to Canadians' higher life expectancy, as well as remarriage and union formation at older ages, which can enable relationships to exist well into the senior years.

Chart 11.3

Population in couples, by age group and sex, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada. 2007. *Family Portrait: Continuity and Change in Canadian Families and Households in 2006, 2006 Census*. Catalogue no. 97-553-XIE.

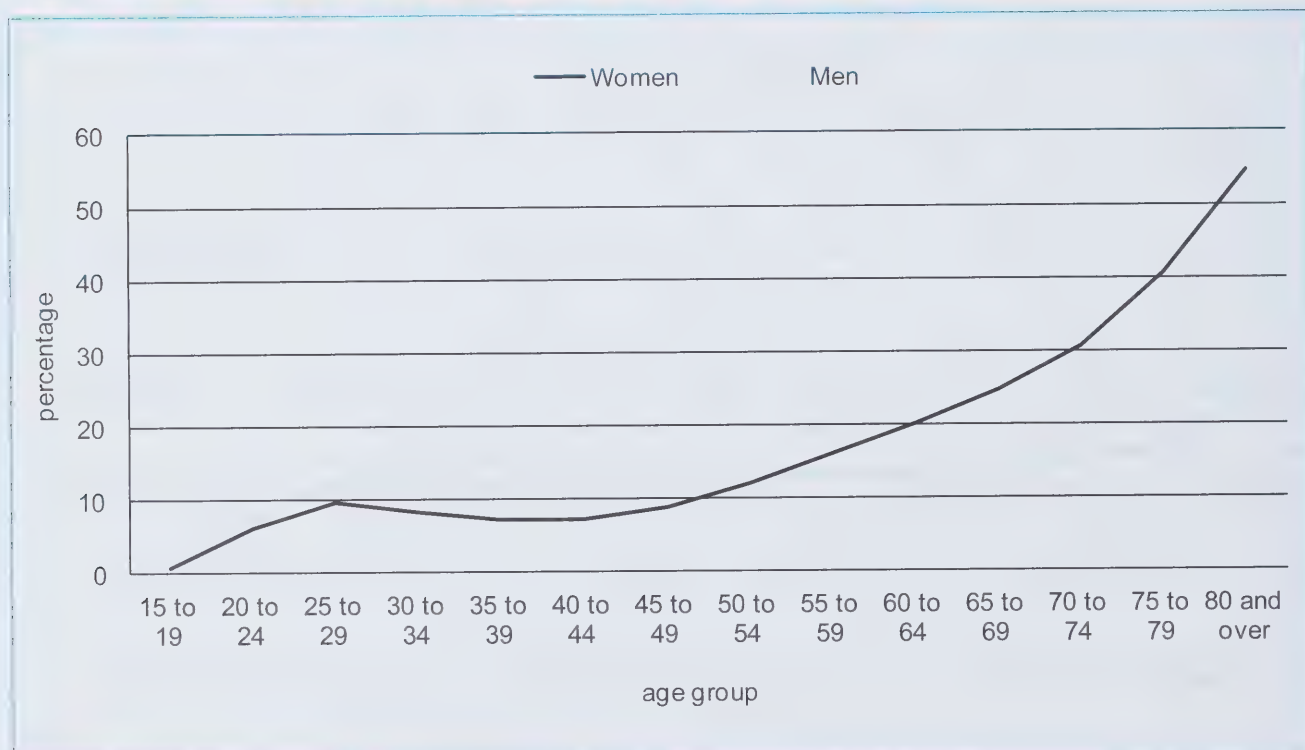
244. The census data in this section refer to the population in private households.

In 2006, 96% of senior women in couples were married; the remaining 4% lived in common-law unions. The number of women in common-law unions, while low, has been increasing. From 2001 to 2006, the growth of senior women in common-law unions was 54% compared with a 13% growth of senior women in couples overall. As common-law unions become more accepted by older generations, and as the population living common-law in their younger and middle adult years grow older, the number of women who live common-law in their senior years can also be expected to rise. Many seniors who lived common-law in 2006 had been previously married. Among women 65 years and over who were in a common-law union in 2006, 43% had a legal marital status of divorced or separated, 38% were widowed and 19% had never been legally married. Among senior men, these figures were 59%, 22% and 20%, respectively.

While many senior women in private households lived as part of couples in 2006, a large proportion also lived alone; this pattern became more pronounced throughout the senior years. According to 2006 Census data, a higher proportion of men lived alone than did women up until their early fifties, reflecting earlier union formation for women as well as the tendency to be younger than their spouse or partner. By their mid- to late fifties, however, this pattern reversed (Chart 11.4). Thirty-seven percent of women 65 years and over lived alone in 2006, more than double the 17% of senior men who did so. This gap continued to widen throughout the senior years, owing to women's greater longevity and, consequently, a higher proportion of women who were widowed. Fifty-four percent of women aged 80 and over lived alone, compared with 24% of men in that age group. Living alone during the senior years, particularly for the oldest old, could have implications, to the extent that there is more reliance on formal or informal care, and for other issues such as housing needs and finances.

Chart 11.4

Population who live alone by age group and sex, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada. 2007. *Family Portrait: Continuity and Change in Canadian Families and Households in 2006, 2006 Census*. Catalogue no. 97-553-XIE.

Besides living as part of a couple or living alone, senior women live in other types of private-household arrangements—for example, with adult children or with other relatives.²⁴⁵ In 2006, 7.8% of senior women lived with their adult children and 7.3% lived with relatives, as did 2.2% and 2.6% of senior men, respectively. However, living arrangements involving multiple generations sharing a home could mean that exchanges of support flow in either direction. In addition, a small percentage of both women, 1.6%, and men, 1.8%, lived only with non-relatives such as a roommate.

Many recent senior immigrant women live with relatives

Within the population of senior women exists much variation in living arrangements. Senior immigrant women and men were more likely to live with relatives, although this was more common for senior women than for men. Close to 13% of senior immigrant women lived with relatives, as did 3.4% of senior immigrant men (Table 11.4). Among recent immigrants—those who arrived from 2001 to 2006—the proportions were 40% and 9.5%, respectively. Most senior immigrant women arrive in the Family Class immigration stream as either parents or grandparents and are thus supported by their sponsor for 10 years. Among the non-immigrant population, 5.0% of women aged 65 years and over, and 2.3% of men in this age group, lived with relatives.

Thirty percent of senior immigrant women lived alone, compared with 40% of senior non-immigrant women. Of senior immigrant women who had arrived in the five years prior to the 2006 Census, 8.3% lived alone. The corresponding percentages for men aged 65 years and over who lived alone were less than half of the figures for senior women in each of these respective categories: 13%, 19% and 2.7%.

Table 11.4

Living arrangements of women and men aged 65 years and over by immigrant status, Canada, 2006

Living arrangements	Women			Men		
	Non-immigrants	All immigrants	Recent immigrants ¹ percentage	Non-immigrants	All immigrants	Recent immigrants ¹
Living with family	57.8	69.0	89.6	79.3	85.7	95.8
Spouses	43.5	46.0	38.7	70.3	77.5	82.2
Common-law partners	2.0	0.9	0.7	4.6	2.2	1.0
Lone parents	7.1	9.3	10.3	2.0	2.5	3.0
Children	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
Living with relatives	5.0	12.6	39.7	2.3	3.4	9.5
Not living with family	42.2	31.0	10.4	20.7	14.3	4.2
Living with non-relatives only	1.7	1.3	2.0	2.1	1.4	1.5
Living alone	40.5	29.7	8.3	18.6	12.9	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

1. Recent immigrants are immigrants who arrived in Canada from 2001 to 2006. They are a subgroup of the immigrant category.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

245. Living with adult children refers to seniors living as lone parents—that is, with sons and daughters who do not have a spouse, common-law partner or children of their own in the same household. Living with relatives could include living with adult children who have a spouse, common-law partner or children of their own in the same household or with siblings, cousins, nephews or nieces or other extended family members. See the concept of census family in the *Census dictionary* for more information.

Extent of social network decreases with age for senior women

Network of family and friend can be a source of support and play an important role in senior's feelings of satisfaction with life as a whole.²⁴⁶

In 2008, almost all (98%) women aged 65 and over reported having at least one family member whom they felt close to, that is, whom they felt at ease with and could talk to about what was on their mind and whom they could ask for help (Table 11.5).

Table 11.5

Characteristics of social networks and senior women's and men's feeling about life as a whole, by age group, Canada, 2008

Characteristic	Women		Men		Total	
	65 to 74 years	75 years and over	65 to 74 years	75 years and over	Women aged 65 years and over	Men aged 65 years and over
	average score		percentage			
Satisfaction with life as a whole¹	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.1	8.2	8.2
Feeling about life as a whole						
Happy and interested in life	79.3	79.1	77.2	77.7	79.2	77.4
Somewhat happy	18.5	18.8	20.5	18.1	18.7	19.5
Somewhat unhappy	2.2 ^E	2.1 ^E	2.4 ^E	4.2 ^E	1.2	3.1 ^E
Number of family members respondent feels close to						
None	1.6 ^{E‡}	2.3 ^E	5.1 ^{E‡}	3.4 ^E	1.9 [‡]	4.4
One to four	41.0 [*]	46.8	42.3	43.5	43.8	42.8
Five or more	57.3 [*]	51.0	52.7	53.0	54.3	52.8
Number of friends respondent feels close to						
None	9.6 [*]	14.5	9.8 [*]	14.7	12.0	11.8
One or two	21.3 [‡]	23.9 [‡]	17.3 [‡]	13.3 [‡]	22.6 [‡]	15.6
Three or more	69.1	61.6 [‡]	72.9	72.0 [‡]	65.5 [‡]	72.5
Number of friends excluding closest						
None	11.0 [‡]	13.6 [‡]	8.2 [*]	12.0 [‡]	12.2	9.8
At least one	89.0 [‡]	86.4 [‡]	91.8 [*]	88.0 [‡]	87.8	90.2
Daily contacts						
Family	9.7 [‡]	11.4 [‡]	6.1 [‡]	8.0 [‡]	10.5 [‡]	6.9
Friends	11.1	14.1	11.6	15.4	12.5	13.2
Respondent misses having people around						
Yes	25.0 [‡]	34.0 [‡]	28.2 [‡]	33.4 [‡]	29.3 [‡]	30.3
More or less	16.8 [*]	13.5	14.4	13.4	15.2	14.0
No	58.2 [*]	52.5	57.4	53.3	55.5	55.7

‡ statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

* statistically significant difference between age groups at $p < 0.05$

1. To measure satisfaction with life we use a scale that goes from 1 to 10, where 1 means "very dissatisfied" and 10 means "very satisfied."

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2008 – Social Networks.

246. In this and subsequent sections that use General Social Survey data or Canadian Community Health Survey data, people living in private households are included in the analysis, whereas people living in institutions and collective dwellings are excluded.

The size of family networks diminishes somewhat by age group. Women aged 75 and over (51%) were slightly less likely than those aged 65 to 74 (57%) to have five or more family members whom they felt close to. Similar differences are observed with respect to having close friends. Women aged 75 and over were more likely than younger women to have no friends whom they felt close to. In 2008, 10% of women aged 65 to 74 reported no close friends, compared with 15% of those aged 75 and over.

Senior women living alone reported fewer people whom they felt close to than their counterparts living in couples. More specifically, among women living alone just under half (49%) reported feeling close to five or more people within their family. By comparison, the corresponding proportion was 59% for those in couples (Table 11.6).

Even though they felt close to fewer people, senior women living alone were more likely than those living in couples to have more frequent daily contacts. For example, nearly one senior woman in five (18%) living alone reported getting together daily with one or more members of their friends, double the proportion recorded for women living in couples (9.2%).

Table 11.6

Social network characteristics of senior women and men, by living arrangement, Canada, 2008

Characteristic	Women aged 65 years and over		Men aged 65 years and over	
	Living alone	In a couple	Living alone	In a couple
	average score			
Satisfaction with life as a whole¹	8.0	8.4	7.6	8.3
	percentage			
Feeling about life as a whole				
Happy and interested in life	75.4 * ‡	82.0	68.7 * ‡	79.9
Somewhat happy	21.2 *	16.8	26.2 *	17.4
Somewhat unhappy	3.4 *	1.2 ^E ‡	5.1 ^E *	2.8 ^E
Number of family members respondent feels close to				
None	3.2 *	...	6.1 ^E ‡	3.7 ^E
One to four	48.0 *	40.6	49.2 *	41.8
Five or more	48.8 *	58.8	44.7 *	54.5
Number of friends respondent feels close to				
None	11.4	9.2	15.0 *	10.2
One to two	23.7 ‡	20.6 ‡	18.8 ‡	14.6
Three or more	64.9 *	70.2 ‡	66.2 *	75.2
Number of friends excluding closest				
None	12.6	9.9	14.5 *	7.6
At least one	87.4	90.1	85.5 *	92.4
Daily contacts				
Family	13.0 *	8.2 ‡	11.1 *	5.9
Friends	18.1 *	8.9	20.2 *	11.5
Respondent misses having people around				
Yes	32.9 *	26.4	37.4 *	29.2
More or less	15.8	14.9	13.5	14.5
No	51.3 *	58.7	49.1 *	56.3

* statistically significant difference between persons living alone and persons in a couple at $p < 0.05$

‡ statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

1. To measure satisfaction with life we use a scale that goes from 1 to 10, where 1 means "very dissatisfied" and 10 means "very satisfied."

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2008 – Social Networks.

While the majority of senior women reported that they were satisfied with their social life, those living alone were more likely to say that they missed having people around. One woman in three (33%) aged 65 and over living alone reported that they missed having people around, while for those living in couples, the corresponding proportion was 26%. However, the gap was wider for senior men: 37% of those living alone reported that they missed having people around, compared to 29% of those in couples (Table 11.6).

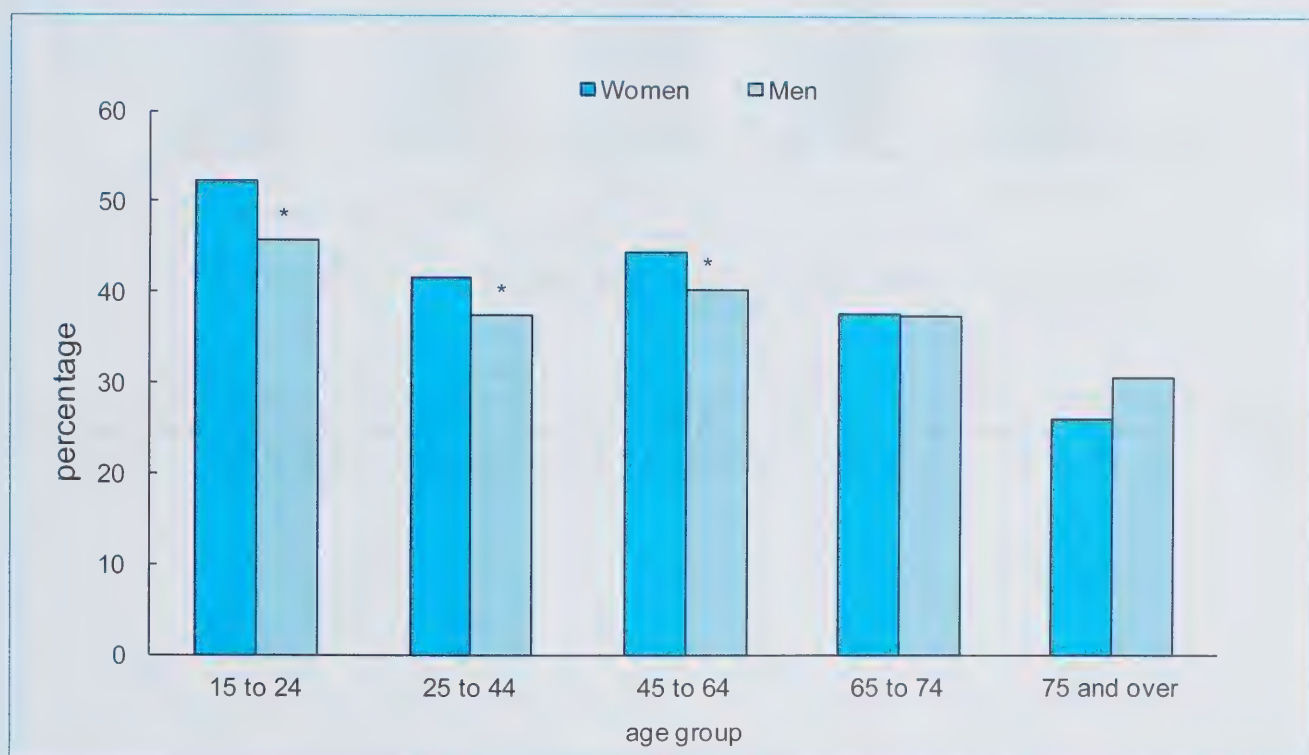
Three-quarters (75%) of senior women living alone reported that they were happy and interested in life. Nevertheless, this proportion was smaller than for women in couples (82%) and senior women in general (79%). Once again, living alone seemed to have a greater affect on senior men: 69% of men living alone reported that they were happy and interested in life, compared with 80% of those in couples.

Nearly one senior woman in three had done volunteer work

In 2008, approximately 3 in 10 senior women (32%) had done volunteer work, up from 26% in 2003. Participation in this activity decreases with age. Among women aged 75 and over, 26% reported that they had done volunteer work in the 12 months preceding the survey (Chart 11.5).

Chart 11.5

Women and men who did volunteer work, by age group, Canada, 2008

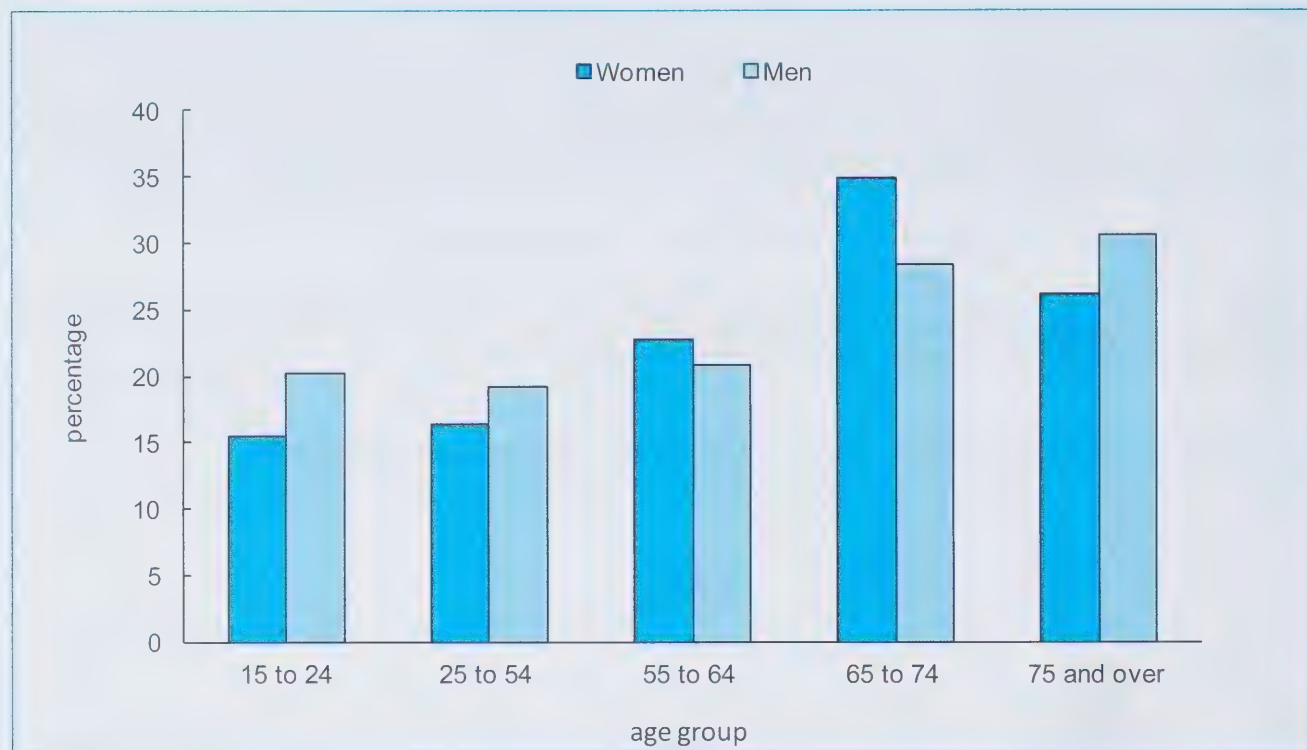


* statistically significant between women and men at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2008 – Social Networks.

Chart 11.6

Women and men who did more than 15 hours of volunteer work per month, by age group, Canada, 2008



Note: None of the differences between women and men are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2008 – Social Networks.

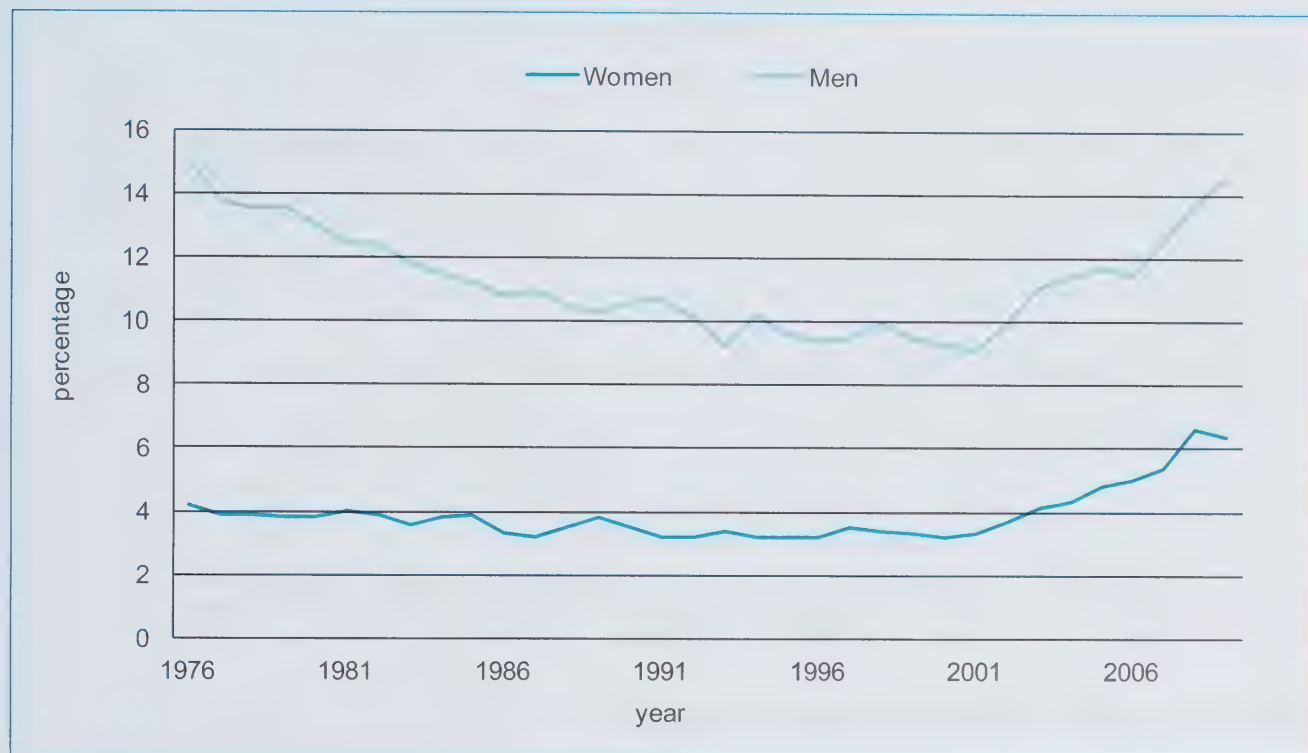
In 2008, women aged 65 to 74 were especially likely to put in a large number of hours doing volunteer work. In fact, the percentage of those who had done more than 15 hours of volunteer work per month was 35% (Chart 11.6). By comparison, the corresponding proportion was 16% for women aged 25 to 54.

The proportion of senior women holding a paid job doubled in the past decade

In 2009, 6.4% of women aged 65 and over held a paid job, double the proportion that did so in 2000 (3.2%). For senior men as well, the percentage holding a paid job went up during this period, increasing from 9% in 2000 to 15% between 2000 and in 2009. The increase observed for senior women and men in the 2000s marks a break with the trends observed in previous decades (Chart 11.7).

Chart 11.7

Employment rates of women and men aged 65 years and over, Canada, 1976 to 2009

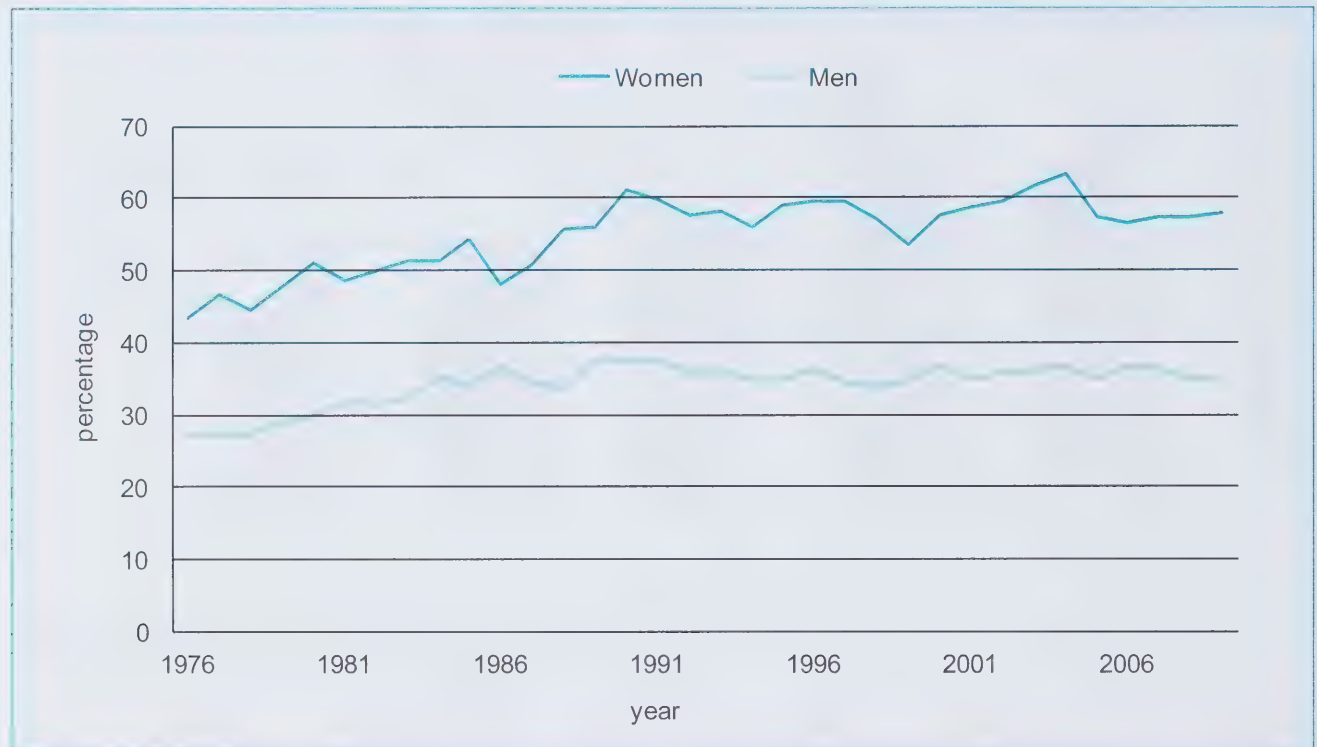


Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0002.

While employment rates increased for senior women, more than half of those employed (58%) worked part-time in 2009. For senior men, the corresponding proportion was 35% for the same year. Unlike women, the percentage of senior men holding a part-time job has remained stable since the mid-1990s (Chart 11.8).

Chart 11.8

Women and men aged 65 years and over holding a job who are working part-time, Canada, 1976 to 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0002.

In the past century, women's participation in the labour force has steadily increased. This trend is reflected in the declining percentage of senior women who never had paid work in their lifetime. In 1976, more than four women in 10 (42%) had never held a paid job. The proportion fell over the decades that followed, declining to 14% in 2009 (Chart 11.9).

Chart 11.9

Women and men aged 65 years and over who never had paid employment in their lifetime, Canada, 1976 to 2009



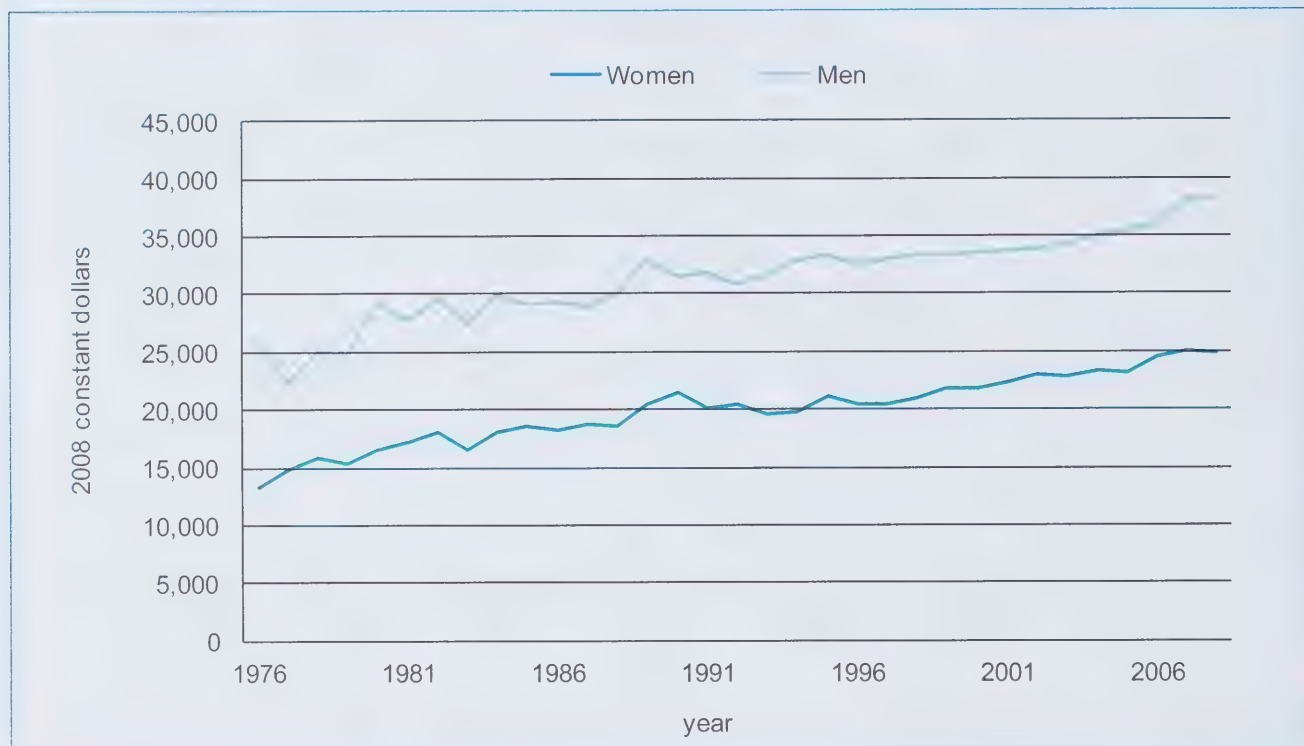
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2009.

Increased average income and more diverse income sources

Senior women's average income after tax from all sources went from \$22,800 to \$24,800 between 2003 and 2008. Despite this increase, senior women's average income remained lower than that of senior men, which was \$38,100 in 2008 (Chart 11.10). Since the mid-2000s, men's average income has remained approximately 1.5 to 1.6 times higher than that of women.

Chart 11.10

Average income of women and men aged 65 years and over, Canada, 1976 to 2008



Sources: Statistics Canada, Survey of Consumer Finances and Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, CANSIM table 202-0403.

Labour market income accounted for nearly half (47%) of the income of women aged 65 and over in 2008, an increase of 7 percentage points from 1998 (Table 11.7). While on the rise, women's labour market income remains lower than that of men. In fact, this type of income accounted for nearly two-thirds (63%) of the total income of men aged 65 and over in 2008.

Table 11.7

Income sources as percentage of total income of women and men aged 65 years and over, Canada, 1998 and 2008

Income source	1998		2008	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
	dollars (millions)			
Total income	40,996	50,582	58,662	74,093
	percentage			
Market income	40.2	55.4	47.4	62.5
Earnings	2.3	7.9	4.9	11.8
Salaries, wages and commissions	1.8	4.7	3.9	7.9
Self-employment income	0.5	3.2	1.0	3.9
Self-employment, farm	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
Self-employment, non-farm	0.3	2.7	1.0	3.7
Investment income	14.1	11.3	11.0	10.5
Retirement income ¹	21.7	34.9	28.6	36.6
Other income	2.1	1.3	2.9	3.6
Government transfers	59.8	44.6	52.6	37.5
Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement and Spouse's Allowance	36.6	20.9	30.0	16.9
Canada Pension Plan and Quebec Pension Plan	19.9	21.1	19.7	18.0
Child Tax Credit	F	F	F	F
Unemployment Insurance benefits	F	0.2	0.1	0.3
Workers' compensation benefits	0.5	0.7	0.4	1.0
Goods and Services Tax and Harmonized Sales Tax credits	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.4
Provincial and territorial tax credits	1.0	0.6	1.1	0.6
Social assistance	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.1
Other government transfers	..	..	F	F

1. Retirement income includes pensions benefits superannuation payments or annuities generated by employer pension plans.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 202-0407.

Government transfers have declined

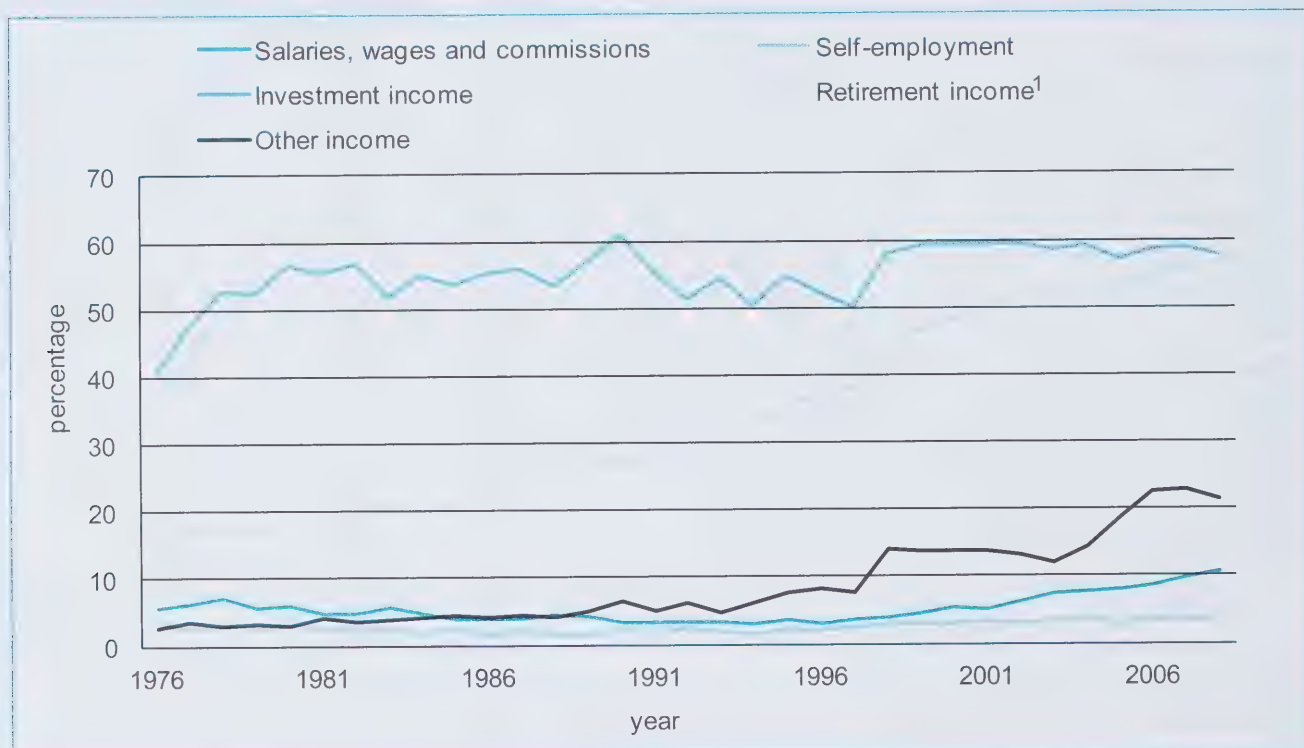
The largest source of income for senior women continues to be government transfers, which include Old Age Security, the Guaranteed Income Supplement, the Spouse's Allowance, the Canada Pension Plan and the Quebec Pension Plan. Government transfers accounted for more than half (53%) of senior women's total income in 2008, while for senior men, the corresponding proportion was 38%.

For the past 10 years, the share of senior women's income coming from government transfers has been declining. This decrease is attributable in part to the decrease in the percentage represented by Old Age Security, the Guaranteed Income Supplement and the Spouse's Allowance. This percentage went from 37% in 1998 to 30% in 2008. At the same time, employment income and the employment rates of those doing paid work increased among senior women.

From 1976 to 2008, retirement income was the income source that registered the strongest increase. In 1976, only 15% of the total income of women aged 65 and over consisted of retirement income. That proportion steadily increased in the next three decades. In 2008, retirement income accounted for 54% of senior women's income from all sources (Chart 11.11). This is attributable to the fact that more of these women held a paid job during their lifetime.

Chart 11.11

Women aged 65 years and over receiving income from various sources, Canada, 1976 to 2008



1. Retirement income includes pensions benefits superannuation payments or annuities generated by employer pension plans.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Survey of Consumer Finances and Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, CANSIM table 202-0407.

Low income for senior women continues to decline

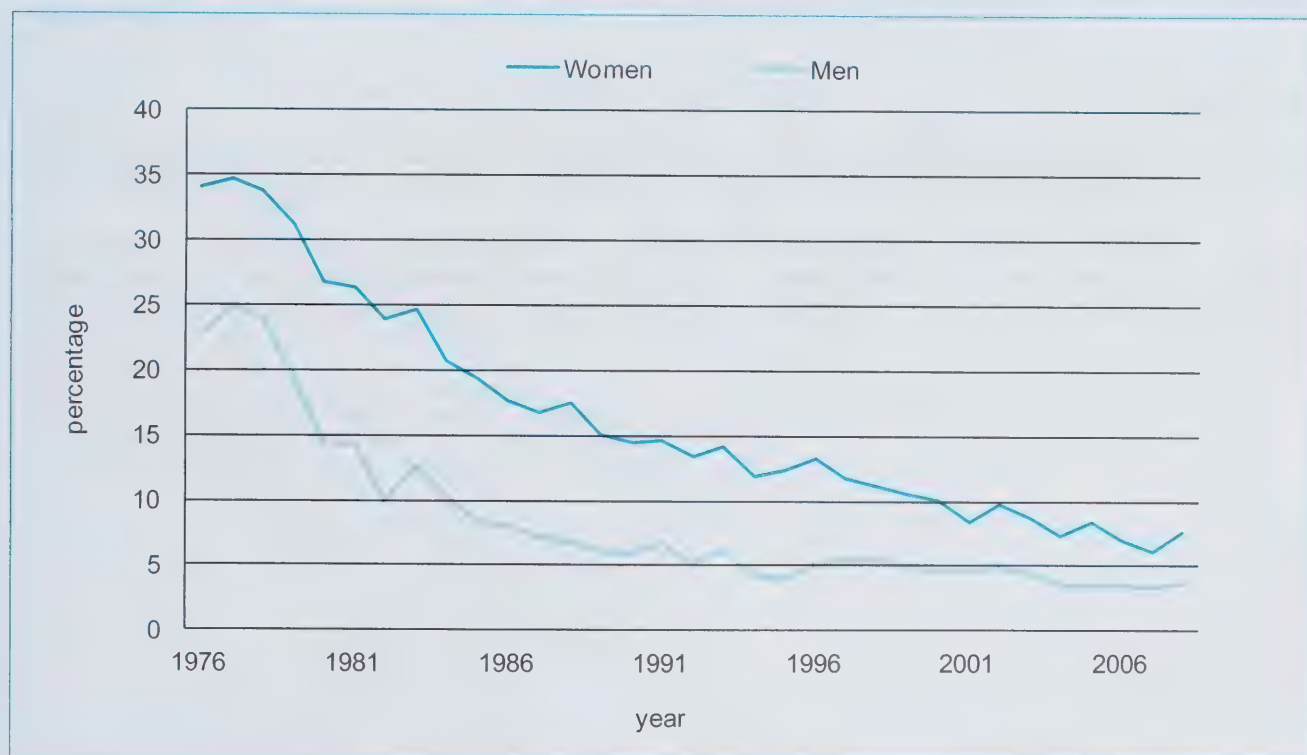
In 2008, 7.6% of senior women were in low income after tax, a decrease of over three percentage points compared to 1998, when 11% of senior women found themselves in this situation. This reflects an overall downward trend that has been continuing for several decades (Chart 11.12). Toward the end of the 1970s, more than one in three women aged 65 and over lived in low income.

Despite the decline, the percentage of women aged 65 and over in low income remains higher than men. In 2008, 3.6% of senior men were in low income, which is half the level for senior women.

In 2008, 17% of women aged 65 and over who were living alone were in low income after tax—this was five percentage points higher than the rate for senior men (12%). The proportion of women living alone in low income has declined over time. In 1980, more than half (57%) of senior women living alone were in low income after tax (Table 11.8).

Chart 11.12

Women and men aged 65 years and over whose income is below the low income cut-off after tax, Canada, 1976 to 2008



Sources: Statistics Canada, Survey of Consumer Finances and Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, CANSIM table 202-0802.

Table 11.8

Women and men aged 65 years and over in low income after tax, by family status, Canada, 1980 to 2008

Year	In a couple		Living alone	
	Women	Men percentage	Women	Men
1980	5.5	6.5	57.1	47.0
1985	3.6	4.4	42.1	28.7
1990	2.2	2.6	30.5	20.6
1995	1.9	1.9	26.7	12.1
2000	2.5	1.7	21.6	17.6
2005	1.3 ^E	1.2 ^E	20.3	13.6
2008	1.8 ^E	1.5 ^E	17.1	12.1

Note: Based on 1992 Statistics Canada low income cut-offs.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, 1980 to 2008.

The majority of senior women describe their health in positive terms

In 2009, three out of four women aged 65 and over living in a private household described their health in positive terms (Table 11.9). When their health status is compared to that of men, very few differences were observed.

People have less of a tendency to perceive their health in positive terms as they get older. One explanation of this may be the prevalence of chronic health conditions at more advanced ages. While the propensity to perceive one's health in positive terms declines with age, more than two in three women (67%) aged 85 and over did so.²⁴⁷

247. This chapter draws a general profile of health and care received for senior women in Canada. For more information on the health of immigrant senior women, see the chapter on health.

Table 11.9

Self-reported health of senior women and men living in private households, by age group, Canada, 2009

Age group	Perception of health							
	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total ¹	In	In
							positive terms ²	negative terms ³
percentage								
65 to 74 years								
Women	14.3 *	29.6 *	35.7	14.8 *	5.6 *	100.0	79.6 *	20.4 *
Men	15.6 *	30.6 *	33.5	16.1 *	4.3 *	100.0	79.7 *	20.3 *
Women and men	14.9 *	30.1 *	34.7	15.4 *	4.9 *	100.0	79.7 *	20.4 *
75 to 84 years								
Women	9.3	26.1	35.0	22.1	7.5	100.0	70.4	29.6
Men	10.5 *	27.6	34.3	19.5	8.0	100.0	72.5 *	27.5 *
Women and men	9.8	26.8 *	34.7	21.0	7.7	100.0	71.3 *	28.7 *
85 years and over †								
Women	8.9	24.9	33.4	22.7	10.2	100.0	67.2	32.8
Men	6.1 ^E	19.5	35.7	25.5	13.2 ^E	100.0	61.3	38.7
Women and men	7.9	22.9	34.3	23.7	11.3	100.0	65.0	35.0
Total — 65 years and over								
Women	12.0	27.9	35.3	18.1	6.7	100.0	75.2	24.8
Men	13.2	28.9	33.9	17.9	6.1	100.0	76.0	24.0
Women and men	12.6	28.4	34.7	18.0	6.4	100.0	75.6	24.4

* statistically significant difference in relation to reference group at $p < 0.05$

† refers to reference group

1. The total refers to the sum of the first five categories.

2. The positive terms category includes excellent, very good and good. The negative terms categories includes fair and poor.

Note: No statistically significant difference between women and men.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Chronic health conditions

Seniors are much more likely than the rest of the population to have chronic health conditions. In 2009, 83% of women aged 65 and over living in a private household reported having at least one long-term health condition, that is, a health condition that had been diagnosed by a health professional and had lasted for six months or more (Table 11.10).²⁴⁸ For men, the corresponding proportion was 79%.

The probability of having a long-term health condition increases with age. For women aged 65 to 74, 80% suffered from at least one chronic health condition; for those aged 75 and over, the proportion was 86% (results not shown). This pattern is not confined to senior women, however; the proportions are similar for senior men.

Since chronic health problems are more common among seniors, contacts with medical personnel are generally inevitable. In these circumstances, having access to a regular medical doctor becomes especially important. In 2009, 4% of women aged 65 and over had no regular medical doctor, while for men the corresponding proportion was 5% (results not shown).²⁴⁹

Table 11.10

Chronic health conditions among senior women and men living in a private household, by age group, Canada, 2009

Chronic health condition ¹	65 to 74 years		75 to 84 years		85 years and over [†]		Total – 65 years and over	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	percentage							
High blood pressure	48.6 ‡*	43.3 *	56.5 ‡	48.5	57.4 ‡	40.5	52.2 ‡	44.9
Arthritis	46.5 ‡*	27.2 *	52.6 ‡	39.1	57.0 ‡	43.3	49.6 ‡	32.3
Diabetes	13.1 ‡	21.7	17.6 ‡*	23.2	14.8	20.1	14.8 ‡	22.1
Heart disease	10.0 ‡*	17.1 *	19.0 ‡*	23.0	27.2	23.7	14.8 ‡	19.5
Urinary incontinence	9.7 ‡*	6.5 *	13.4 *	12.3	23.1 ‡	14.5	12.3 ‡	9.0
Asthma	9.4 ‡	6.3	7.7	7.0	7.0 ^E	8.1 ^E	8.6 ‡	6.7
Chronic bronchitis	7.8	7.3 *	8.9	10.9 *	6.6 ^E	11.1 ^E	8.1	8.8
Mood disorder	7.4 ‡*	4.0	5.3 *	4.5	6.0	3.2 ^E	6.6 ^{E‡}	4.2
Migraine	8.0 ‡*	3.4	4.8 ‡	2.3	5.0 ^E	5.5 ^E	6.6 ‡	3.2
Anxiety	5.8 ‡*	2.6	3.9 ‡*	2.6 ^E	4.0 ^E	3.0 ^E	5.0 ‡	2.6
Ulcers	5.1 ‡	3.4	4.1	4.4	5.2 ^E	2.8 ^E	4.8 ‡	3.7
Cancer	4.4 ‡	6.1	5.0 ‡	9.0	5.4 ^{E‡}	11.4	4.7 ‡	7.4
Effects of stroke	3.4	2.9 *	4.1 ‡*	5.8 *	8.9 *	7.1 ^{E*}	4.2	4.2
Alzheimer's or other form of cerebral dementia	0.6 ^{E*}	0.7 ^{E*}	2.9 ^{E*}	4.0 ^E	5.9 ^{E*}	F	1.9 *	2.5
At least one chronic health condition	80.3 ‡	75.1	85.6	83.2	88.9	86.9	82.9 ‡	78.6

† refers to reference group

‡ statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

* statistically significant difference in relation to reference group at $p < 0.05$

1. Chronic health condition refers to health problems that have been reported by the respondent and diagnosed by a health professional and that have lasted for six months or more.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Chronic health conditions can cause diseases, some of which pose high risks of death. These conditions can also affect the quality of life and independence of persons living in private households. Depending on their severity, these conditions may induce sufferers to move into a long-term care facility.

248. This percentage refers to persons diagnosed with one of the 14 chronic health conditions included in Table 11.10. There are other types of conditions for which data were not collected in the Canadian Community Health Survey.

249. For more information on access to formal health care, see the chapter on health.

High blood pressure is senior women's most common chronic health condition

More than one out of two women aged 65 and over (52%) reported that they had been diagnosed with high blood pressure by a health professional in 2009, whereas in 2003, 47% did so. In 2003, this condition was on the rise; 1 million women aged 65 and over had it (results not shown). In 2009, the corresponding number was 1.2 million. High blood pressure is also the most prevalent chronic health condition for senior men: in 2009, 45% of men aged 65 and over had it.

Arthritis is the second most prevalent chronic health condition among seniors. This condition is characterized by pain and by swelling and stiffness in and around the joints and it can make it difficult to perform various everyday activities.²⁵⁰ It is one of the main causes of chronic pain and mobility limitation among seniors.²⁵¹ In 2009, 50% of women aged 65 and over had been diagnosed with this condition, compared to 33% of men. It is also the chronic health problem with the largest gap between senior women and men.

Diabetes and heart disease are also among the most prevalent chronic health problems among women aged 65 years and over. However, men are more likely to suffer from them. Thus, 15% of women reported having diabetes or heart disease, while approximately one out of five men reported having diabetes (22%) or heart disease (20%) (Table 11.10).

The prevalence of heart disease increases much more substantially by age group for women than for men. Indeed, 10% of women aged 65 to 74 had heart disease, while the proportion doubled for those aged 75 to 84 (19%) and climbed to 27% among those 85 years and over.

Tobacco use and diet differed

Senior women (41%) are much less likely than senior men (68%) to have smoked in their lifetime. However, men appear to be more likely than women to have stopped smoking. In 2009, 9% of women aged 65 and over were using tobacco regularly or occasionally, slightly less than the 11% registered for men (Table 11.11).

Table 11.11
Current and past tobacco use among senior women and men, by age group, Canada, 2009

Tobacco use	65 to 74 years		75 to 84 years		85 years and over		Total 65 years and over	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	percentage							
Regularly or occasionally	11.0 *	13.6	6.4	7.4	2.6 ^E	3.7 ^E	8.6 *	10.8
Never	89.0 *	86.4	93.6	92.6	97.4 ^E	96.2 ^E	91.4 *	89.2
Has smoked								
Yes	45.4 *	67.7	36.1 *	69.4	29.1 *	61.1	40.6 *	67.8
No	54.7 *	32.3	63.9 *	30.6	70.9 *	38.9	59.4 *	32.2

* statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

250. For more information, see "Life with arthritis in Canada: A personal and public health challenge," 2010 Arthritis Surveillance Report, published by the Public Health Agency of Canada, 128 p.

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cd-mc/arthritis-arthrite/lwaic-vaaac-10/2-eng.php> (site visited on January 20, 2011).

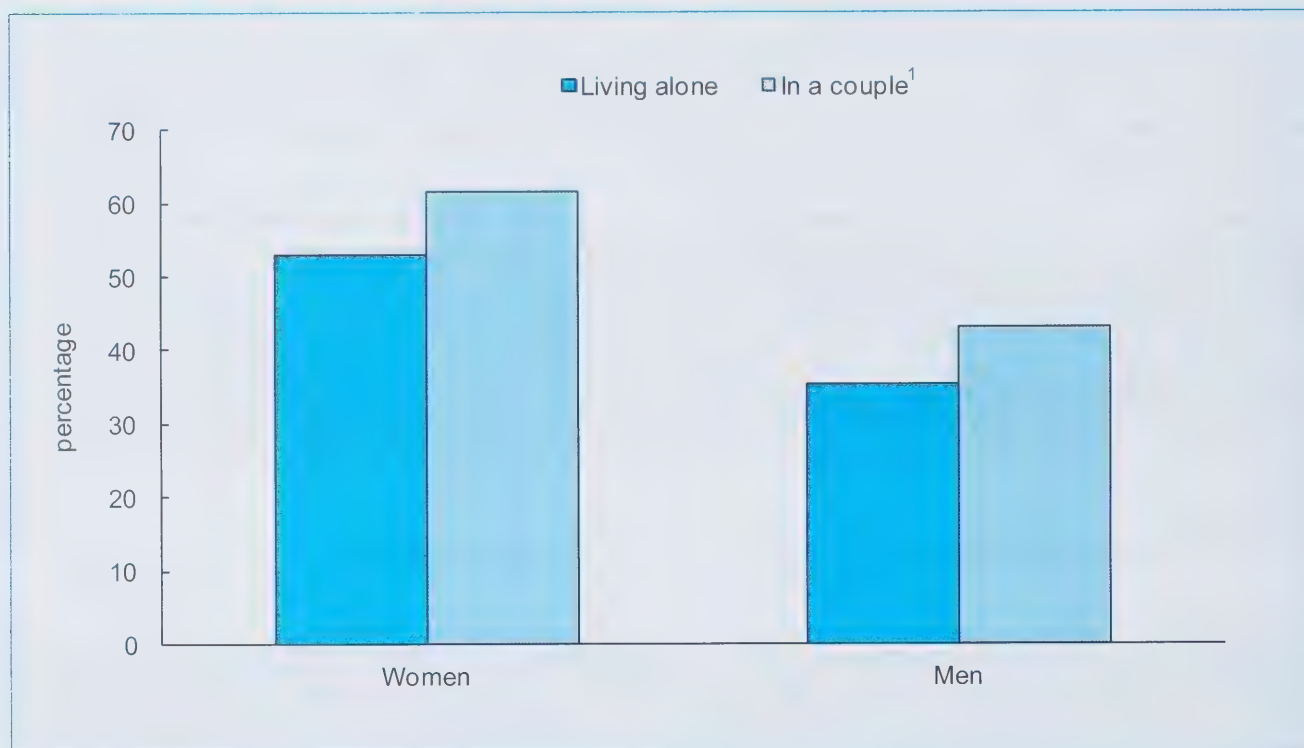
251. Wilkins, Kathryn. 2004. "Incident arthritis in relation to excess weight," *Health Reports*, Vol. 15, no. 1, Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 82-003, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/studies-etudes/82-003/archive/2004/6764-eng.pdf> (site visited on January 20, 2011).

With respect to diet, women are more likely than men to consume a larger quantity of fruits and vegetables daily. Slightly more than half (55%) of senior women reported consuming five or more portions of fruits and vegetables per day, compared with 41% of senior men (results not shown).

Whether one lives alone or in a couple affects the consumption of fruits and vegetables. Women aged 65 and over living in couples were more likely than those living alone to consume a large quantity of fruits and vegetables. The same pattern was observed for senior men (Chart 11.13).

Chart 11.13

Women and men aged 65 years and over who consume 5 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables per day, by living arrangement, Canada, 2009



1. Includes couples with children.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Senior women are more likely to be physically inactive than their male counterparts

While it is beneficial to remain active, health conditions can limit physical activity, especially as a person grows older. In 2009, physical inactivity was more prevalent among women than among men. Also, inactivity increased substantially by age group. It went from 56% for women aged 65 to 74 to 81% for those aged 85 and over (Table 11.12).

Walking is the most popular physical activity for seniors, both female and male. In 2009, more than 6 out of 10 people had engaged in this activity in the previous three months.

Table 11.12**Physical activity and walking among senior women and men, by age group, Canada, 2009**

Physical activity	Women			Men			Women	Men
	65 to 74 years	75 to 84 years	85 years and over †	65 to 74 years	75 to 84 years	85 years and over †	Total 65 years and over	
	percentage							
Active or moderately active	43.8 ‡*	30.6 ‡*	19.4 ‡	53.3 *	46.9 *	32.5 ‡	37.2 ‡	50.0
Inactive	56.2 ‡*	69.4 ‡*	80.7 ‡	46.7 *	53.1 *	67.5 ‡	62.8 ‡	50.0
Walking	69.9	55.7 ‡	44.4	67.8 *	59.9	48.0	62.5	63.8

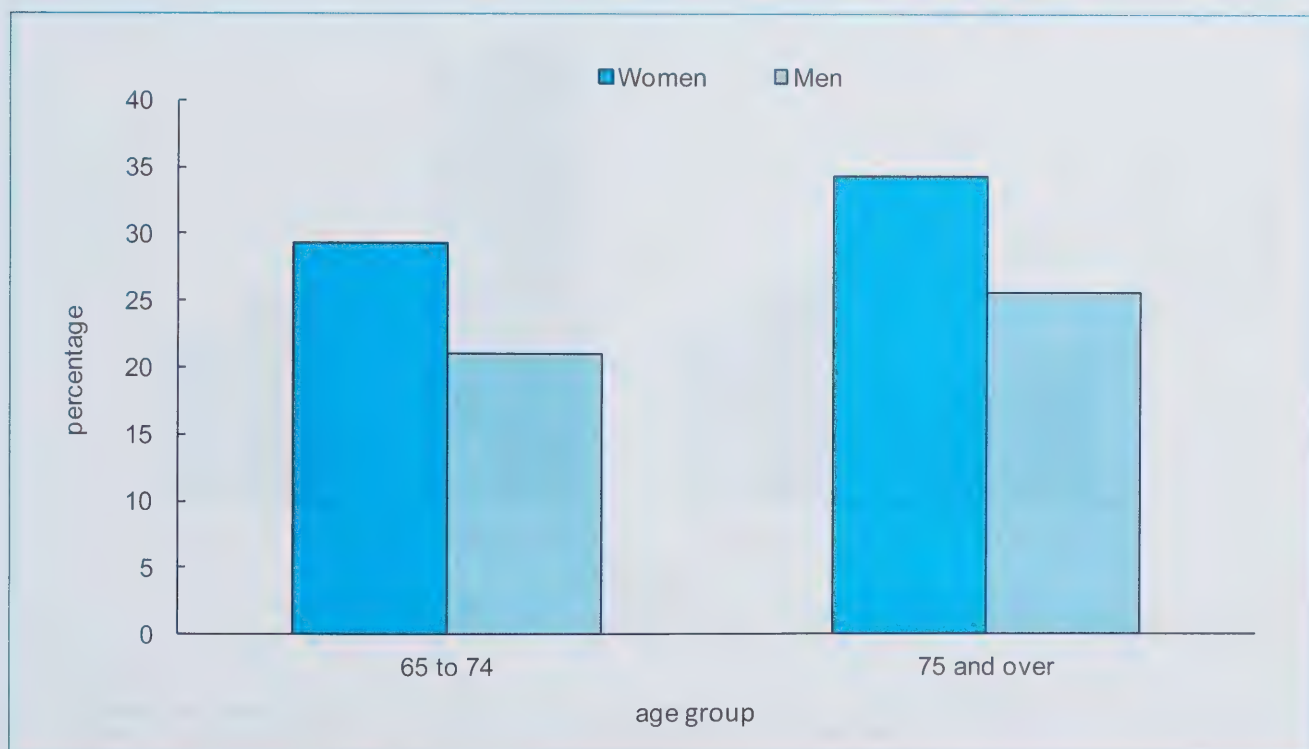
† refers to reference group

‡ statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$ * statistically significant difference in relation to reference group at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Pain and injuries more common for women

Pain and injuries can affect quality of life and limit activities. Approximately one in three senior women reported that they usually felt pain, which is higher than the proportion for men (slightly more than one in five). Women aged 65 to 74 and those 75 and over were more likely to report that they usually felt pain than men in the same age group (Chart 11.14).

Chart 11.14**Senior women and men who reported experiencing pain, by age group, Canada, 2009**

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Additionally, women are more likely to sustain injuries than men. Nearly one senior woman in 10 (9.4%) had been injured in the previous year seriously enough to limit their daily activities, compared with 8.3% of men (results not shown). Fractures and sprains were the most commonly reported injuries. Of senior women who had injured themselves in the previous 12 months, 31% had suffered a fracture and 27% a sprain or strain. These types of injuries were also the most common for men: 41% had suffered a sprain and 19% a fracture in the previous 12 months.

Among senior women living alone, 11% had injured themselves, compared to 8.5% of those living in couples (results not shown). Seniors living alone may have to perform by themselves tasks for which they should request someone's assistance.

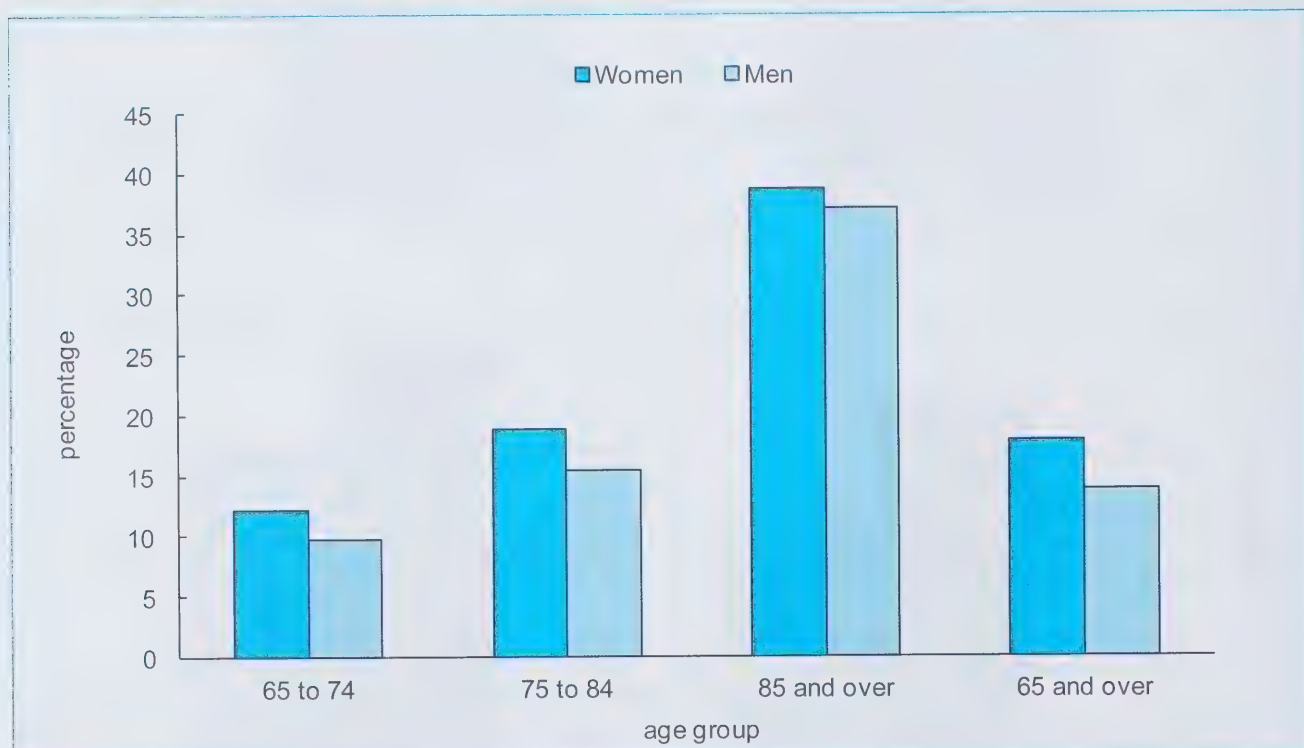
More senior women than men receive informal assistance with everyday activities because of a chronic health condition

Chronic health problems or a long-term physical limitation may affect one's independence in carrying out everyday activities such as preparing meals, housekeeping and co-ordinating health care.

In 2007, nearly one in five women aged 65 and over (18%) had received informal assistance for domestic or personal activities because of a chronic health condition. For men aged 65 and over, 14% received informal assistance. The proportion climbed to 39% for women aged 85 and over (Chart 11.15). In a context of a growing number of women aged 85 and over, the need for informal assistance and support is likely to increase.

Chart 11.15

Senior women and men who received assistance with everyday activities because of a chronic health condition, by age group, Canada, 2007



Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2007 – Family, Social Support and Retirement.

Also, when they receive assistance, women (54%) were more likely than men (31%) to receive informal assistance, mainly from one of their children (Table 11.13).²⁵² In 36% of cases, the main caregiver was a daughter; in 19% of cases, a son.

Table 11.13

Women and men aged 65 years and over who received assistance because of a chronic health problem, by relationship to main caregiver, Canada, 2007

Relationship to main caregiver	Women	Men percentage	Total
Spouse	20.7	48.4 *	30.7
Daughter	35.5	15.9 ^{E*}	28.4
Son	18.7	14.9 ^E	17.4
Other family member or friend	16.4	15.6 ^E	16.1
Close friend	8.7	5.2 ^{E*}	7.5

* statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2007 – Family, Social Support and Retirement.

A smaller proportion of women (21%) than of men (48%) had their spouse as their main caregiver. Many factors can explain this. First, men have a shorter life expectancy and they are more likely than women to have, at an earlier age, a health condition that may cause a loss of independence or long-term hospitalization. Second, senior women were much more likely to be living alone than senior men, and they were more likely to not have a spouse who could help them with everyday activities.²⁵³ The majority of men (62%) (results not shown) who provided assistance to their spouse were aged 65 and over.

Transportation for shopping or banking (63%) was the type of assistance most often received by women aged 65 and over from their main caregiver (Table 11.14). Meal preparation and household tasks (meal cleanup, house-cleaning, laundry or sewing) were the second most common type of assistance (47%) received by senior women.

252. People who are assisted may be receiving help from more than one source. In this chapter the focus is on the main caregiver—namely, the person who devoted the most time and resources to providing care to the assisted person.

253. This chapter is primarily concerned with health and access to informal care. It shows the nature of the relationship between the main caregiver and the senior woman or man receiving care and the type of care received. To learn more about the care that seniors may provide, see the chapter on families, living arrangements and unpaid work.

Table 11.14

Type of assistance received by senior women and men because of a chronic health condition, as a percentage, by age group, Canada, 2007

Type of assistance received	Women			Men		
	65 to 74 years	75 years and over	Total 65 years and over	65 to 74 years	75 years and over	Total 65 years and over
			percentage			
Transportation for grocery shopping or other necessities, banking or bill paying	52.8 *	69.3	63.4 ‡	43.8	58.0	52.2
Meal preparation, washing dishes, housecleaning, laundry or sewing	45.7 ‡	47.7	47.0	32.5	49.9	42.7
House maintenance or outdoor work	48.2	44.2	45.6	42.2	50.6	47.2
Personal care	18.2	25.9	23.1	21.4 ^E	26.9	24.6
Medical treatment or procedures	19.3	23.4	21.9	20.4 ^E	28.9	25.4
Coordination of health care	18.2 ‡	37.7 ‡	30.7 ‡	22.1 ^E	42.1	33.9

* statistically significant difference between age groups at $p < 0.05$

‡ statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2007 – Family, Social Support and Retirement.

Living in collective households or institutions

Most seniors aged 65 and over lived in private households in 2006—91% of women and 95% of men. Owing to their greater longevity, a higher percentage of women spent at least some of their senior years in collective or institutional environments than did men—9.3% of senior women and 5.1% of senior men in 2006 (Table 11.15). Of the 324,500 seniors who lived in some form of collective or institutional residence, about 7 in 10 were women.

The percentage of seniors living in health care and related facilities increased with age, and approximately doubled for senior women (as well as senior men) in each successive age group. In general, the percentage of women and men living in health care and related facilities was relatively low until age 80. Few women and men in their late sixties and early seventies (2.4% or fewer) lived in health care and related facilities in 2006, increasing to 13% of women in their early eighties (and 8.4% of men). One-third (32%) of senior women age 85 and older lived in such settings compared with one-fifth (21%) of men in this age group. The share of senior women and men who lived in other types of collectives such as lodging and rooming houses was relatively low in 2006—0.9% or less across all age groups.

Table 11.15**Population in institutions and collective dwellings, by sex and age group, Canada, 2006**

Age group	Women			Men		
	Total – Collective dwellings	Health care and related facilities	Other collective dwellings	Total – Collective dwellings	Health care and related facilities	Other collective dwellings
			percentage			
65 years and over	9.3	8.8	0.6	5.1	4.6	0.5
65 to 69 years	1.6	1.2	0.4	1.7	1.2	0.5
70 to 74 years	2.9	2.4	0.5	2.4	2.0	0.5
75 to 79 years	6.1	5.6	0.5	4.3	3.9	0.4
80 to 84 years	13.5	12.8	0.6	8.9	8.4	0.5
85 years and over	33.2	32.3	0.9	21.1	20.6	0.6

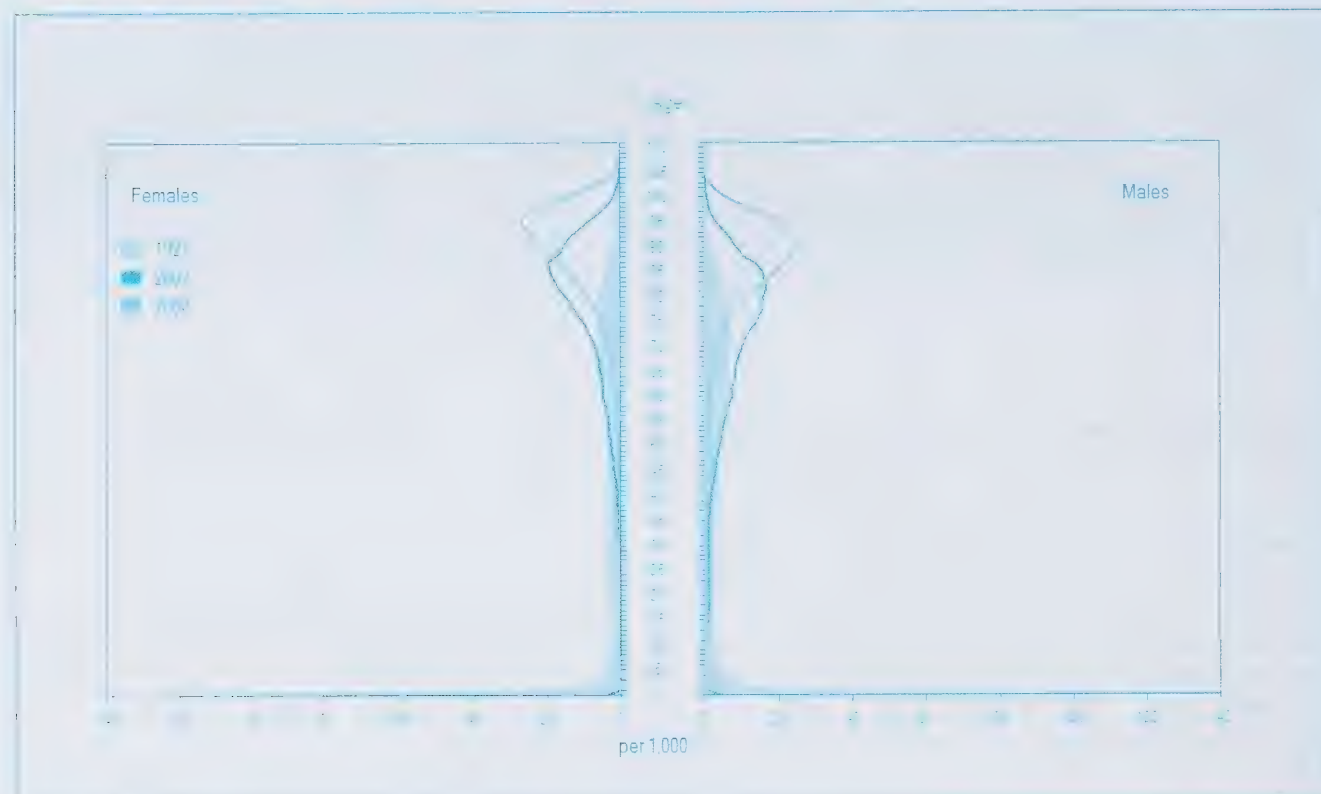
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Senior women living longer

In 2007, there were 235,200 deaths in Canada, 78% of which occurred to people aged 65 years and older (96,500 deaths of senior women and 86,100 of senior men). The overall number of deaths has been increasing for many years, due primarily to both a growing population and an aging population. The combination of higher mortality rates at older ages and greater numbers of people in these age groups will continue to push up the number of deaths as baby boomers get older and enter their senior years.

An age and sex pyramid graphically depicts the number of deaths per 1,000 population by age for the years 1921 and 2007, as well as the projected number for 2060 according to the medium-growth scenario of the most recent population projections (Chart 11.16). In 1921, there was a relatively high number of deaths for infants and in the early childhood years for both males and females, reflecting higher infant and childhood mortality during this period when health and medical conditions were less advanced than today.

There was also a concentration of deaths per 1,000 population among those 65 years and older in 1921, but this concentration was lower overall, and more evenly distributed across the senior years, compared with 2007 and 2060. The number of deaths per 1,000 population in 2007 was concentrated during the ages of the late seventies to early nineties for both women and men, a phenomenon known as the 'compression of mortality.' Indeed, the largest number of deaths for women in 2007 was at age 87 and at 82 for men. In contrast, for 2060, there may be a further upward transition in the number of deaths per 1,000 population to even older ages.

Chart 11.16**Age pyramid of deaths, relative value, Canada, 1921, 2007 and 2060**

Sources: Statistics Canada, Health Statistics Division and Demography Division.

Heart disease and cancer cause most deaths for senior women

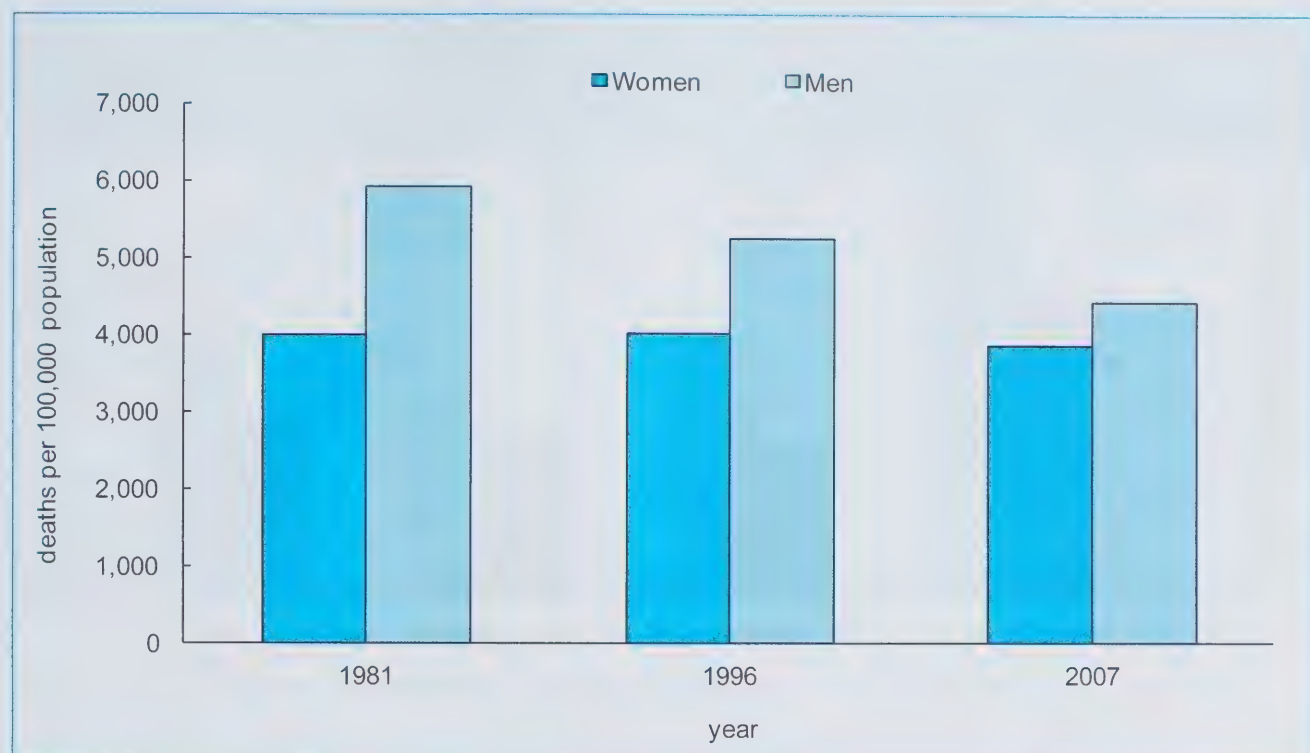
Senior women's mortality rate in 2007 was somewhat lower than senior men's (Chart 11.17). The age-specific mortality rate for women aged 65 and over was 3,872.9 deaths per 100,000 population in 2007, little changed from two earlier periods, 1981 and 1996, when it was just over 4,000. In contrast, senior men saw a sharp decline in the age-specific mortality rate to 4,436.0 in 2007, from 5,252.8 in 1996 and 5,915.8 in 1981.

The leading cause of death in 2007, among both women and men aged 65 years and over, were malignant neoplasms, or cancer: the rates were 945.5 deaths per 100,000 for women and 1,363.6 for men (Table 11.16). The second leading cause of death was heart disease, which had a lower mortality rate for senior women (894.1 deaths per 100,000 population) than for senior men (1,058.4). In contrast, the mortality rate for another common disease of the circulatory system, cerebrovascular disease or strokes, was higher for senior women than senior men (308.0 and 254.4 deaths per 100,000 population, respectively).

In 1981, heart disease was responsible for more deaths of senior women—1,646.1 deaths per 100,000 population—than was cancer—821.5 deaths per 100,000 population (Chart 11.18). The same trend was observed for senior men, although their mortality rate for each cause was much higher in 1981 (2,365.2 and 1,427.7 deaths per 100,000 population, respectively). From 1981 to 2007, the mortality rate from heart disease fell substantially for both senior men and senior women, while deaths from cancer rose for senior women but slipped for senior men.

Chart 11.17

Mortality rates for women and men aged 65 years and over, Canada, 1981, 1996 and 2007



Sources: Statistics Canada, Health Statistics Division and Demography Division.

Table 11.16

Selected causes of death among senior women and men aged 65 years and over, Canada, 2007

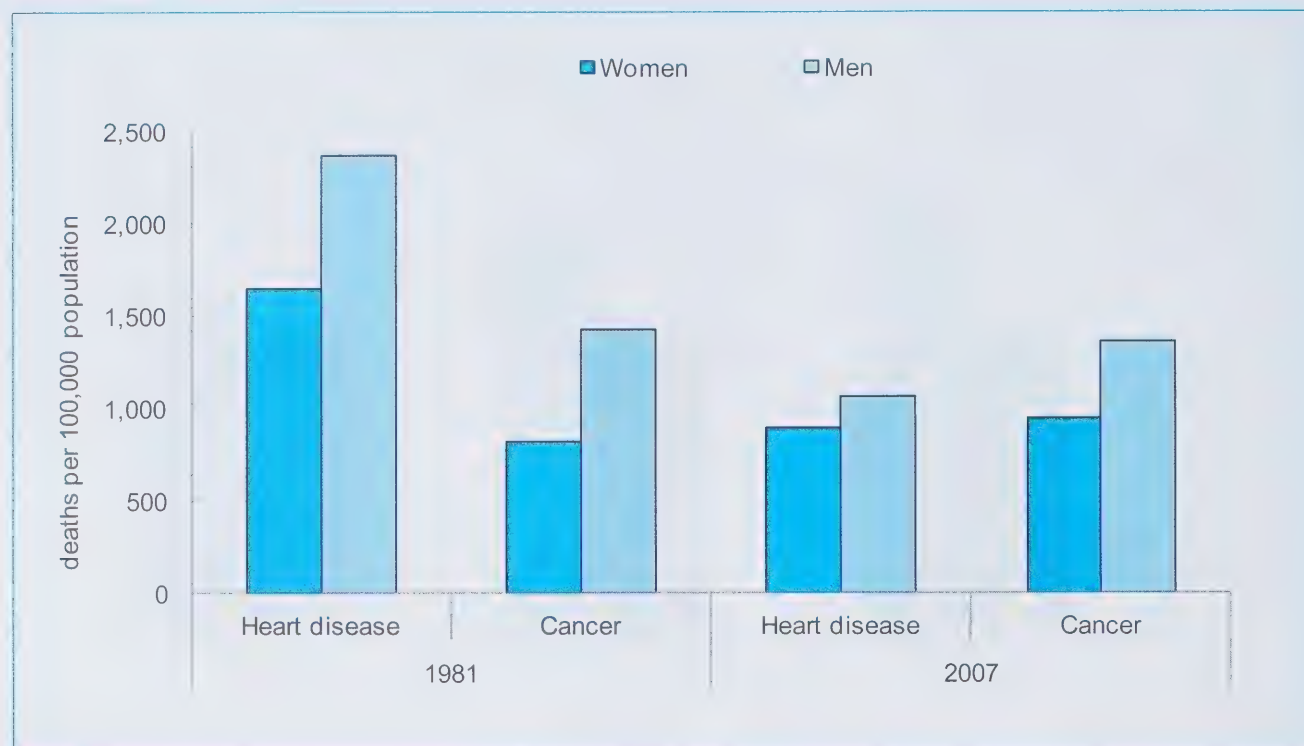
Selected cause of death ¹	Women deaths per 100,000 population	Men deaths per 100,000 population
Malignant neoplasms (cancer)	945.5	1,363.6
Diseases of the heart (heart disease)	894.1	1,058.4
Cerebrovascular diseases (stroke)	308.0	254.4
Chronic lower respiratory diseases	187.1	263.5
Alzheimer's disease	165.4	87.8
Diabetes mellitus (diabetes)	122.2	156.9
Influenza and pneumonia	112.8	108.8
Accidents (unintentional injuries)	105.0	114.3
Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis (kidney disease)	72.2	86.9
Chronic liver diseases and cirrhosis (liver disease)	17.9	38.8
Intentional self-harm (suicide)	4.3	17.9
All causes of death	3,872.9	4,436.0

1. World Health Organization (WHO). International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision (ICD-10).

Sources: Statistics Canada, Health Statistics Division and Demography Division.

Chart 11.18

Mortality rates for women and men aged 65 years and over for selected causes, Canada, 1981 and 2007



Note: 1981: World Health Organization (WHO). International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Ninth Revision (ICD-9).

2007: World Health Organization (WHO). International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision (ICD-10).

Sources: Statistics Canada, Health Statistics Division and Demography Division.

Other leading causes of death for seniors in 2007 included chronic lower respiratory diseases (187.1 and 263.5 deaths per 100,000 population for senior women and men, respectively). The mortality rate for Alzheimer's disease was 165.4 deaths per 100,000 population for women aged 65 years and over, about twice the rate for senior men (87.8 deaths per 100,000 population). The mortality rate from diabetes mellitus, however, was lower for senior women than for senior men (122.2 and 156.9 deaths per 100,000 population, respectively).

There were many changes in the patterns of cancer deaths from 1981 to 2007 (Table 11.17). Mortality rates owing to lung cancer, although lower for senior women than for senior men for each age group, rose sharply from 1981 to 2007 for senior women but decreased for senior men under age 85. In fact, for senior women aged 65 to 74, the mortality rate more than doubled in the 25-year period from 81.3 deaths per 100,000 population in 1981 to 196.2 in 2007. Among older senior women, the mortality rate due to lung cancer has more than tripled from 1981 to 2007, from 83.4 to 260.2 deaths per 100,000 population for those aged 75 to 84, and from 69.3 to 248.5 for those aged 85 and over. This is because older cohorts of women have been replaced by younger cohorts, who had a much higher prevalence of smoking early in life.

Table 11.17

Cancer mortality rates for women and men aged 65 years and over, by type of cancer, Canada, 1981 and 2007

Type of cancer	65 to 74 years		75 to 84 years		85 years and over	
	1981	2007	1981	2007	1981	2007
deaths per 100,000 population						
Lung	213.9	244.7	260.6	364.5	182.2	346.1
Women	81.3	196.2	83.4	260.2	69.3	248.5
Men	373.1	298.2	527.2	505.8	414.0	558.5
Breast (Women)	108.5	77.4	143.3	133.5	223.8	236.4
Prostate (Men)	94.0	62.8	323.8	227.9	676.5	672.4
Colorectal	80.6	59.4	155.5	122.7	244.7	224.5
Women	72.6	46.1	138.3	103.4	232.2	215.1
Men	90.3	74.1	181.4	148.8	270.3	245.1
Other cancers	424.8	388.5	728.1	738.1	1,052.8	1,179.3
Women	348.9	314.2	613.4	602.7	920.3	1,041.6
Men	515.9	470.2	900.8	921.5	1,324.8	1,478.9

Note: 1981: World Health Organization (WHO). International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Ninth Revision (ICD-9).

2007: World Health Organization (WHO). International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision (ICD-10).

Source: Statistics Canada, Health Statistics Division and Demography Division.

In contrast, mortality rates from breast cancer decreased from 1981 to 2007 for women aged 65 to 84. This was true for 65- to 74-year-olds (from 108.5 to 77.4 deaths per 100,000 population) and for 75- to 84-year-olds (from 143.3 to 133.5). For senior women aged 85 and over, the breast cancer mortality rate rose slightly, from 223.8 deaths per 100,000 population in 1981 to 236.4 in 2007.

Mortality rates due to colorectal cancer also decreased across the age groups of both senior women and men from 1981 to 2007. Among women aged 65 to 74, the mortality rate fell from 72.6 to 46.1 deaths per 100,000 population; among women aged 75 to 84, the rate fell from 138.3 to 103.4. The mortality rate for women aged 85 and over also declined, from 232.2 deaths per 100,000 population in 1981 to 215.1 in 2007.

Chapter 12

Women with Activity Limitations

by Susan Crompton

A long-term health problem or chronic condition can prevent someone from participating in necessary activities—doing housework, making meals—or in leisure activities—going places, doing things with family and friends. The social environment may also prevent a person with such a condition from taking part in events; for example, when an event lacks ramps to facilitate physical access or does not provide technical aids such as hearing devices.²⁵⁴

In this chapter, a person is defined as having an activity limitation if they report that they have a long-term physical or psychological health problem, or a chronic condition, that is severe enough to “often” affect their normal functioning at home, at work, at school, or in another domain such as transportation or leisure activities.²⁵⁵

This chapter will use data from the 2009 Canadian Community Health Survey. It will examine the age structure of the population with activity limitations, the different types of limitations, as well as the education and income of women with and without activity limitations.

Measuring the population with activity limitations

The population with activity limitations is constructed using a set of five questions in the 2009 Canadian Community Health Survey. Respondents were classified as having an activity limitation if they answered “often” to at least one of the following questions:

1. Do you have any difficulty hearing, seeing, communicating, walking, climbing stairs, bending, learning or doing any similar activities?
2. Does a long-term physical condition or mental condition or health problem reduce the amount or the kind of activity you can do at home?
3. ...at school? (if the respondent was attending school)
4. ...at work? (if the respondent was employed)
5. ...in other activities, for example, transportation or leisure?

Women are more likely than men to have an activity limitation

In 2009, 12% of women aged 15 and over reported that they had an activity limitation. That is, about 1.7 million Canadian women had a long-term health condition or problem that often made it difficult for them to function normally in everyday life. (A long-term condition is a condition that is expected to last, or has already lasted, six months or more.) Somewhat fewer men aged 15 and over reported having an activity limitation, at 11% or just under 1.5 million.

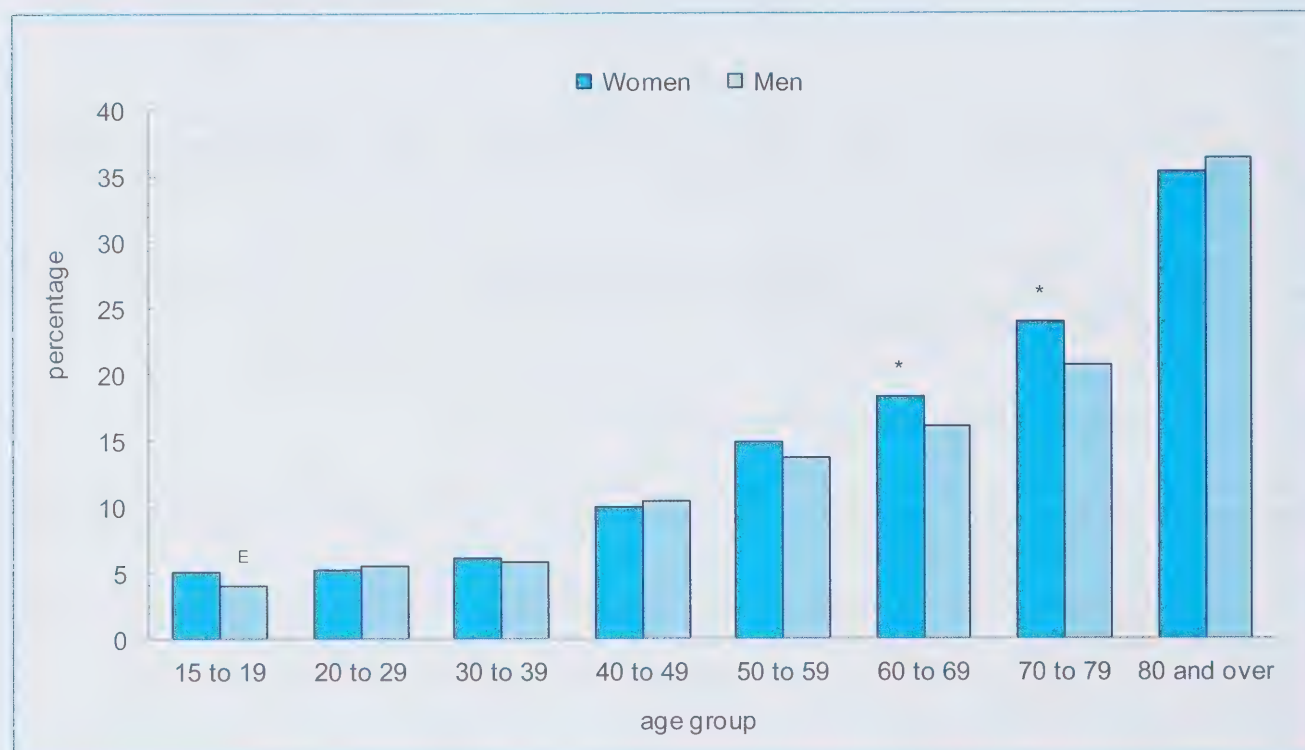
254. For a more detailed discussion of the concept of social-functional activity limitation, and how the ICF (International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health) has been operationalized in Statistics Canada's health surveys, see: MacKenzie, A., M. Hurst and S. Crompton. 2009. “Living with disabilities series: Defining disability in the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey”. *Canadian Social Trends* no. 88. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-008.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2009002/article/11024-eng.htm> (accessed November 7, 2011).

255. Having an activity limitation can also be a temporary condition; for example, someone who has had a knee or hip replacement may face difficulties performing daily activities during months of recovery, but later regain their full functional mobility.

Everyday tasks generally become more difficult as the human body ages: the joints get stiff, the muscles weaken and chronic illnesses take their toll. So it is not surprising that the proportion of women reporting an activity limitation increases steadily with age. Only 5% of women in their teens or 20s reported having an activity limitation. For women in their 40s, this proportion doubled to 10%, and it almost doubled again to 18% for those in their 60s. By the time women reached their 80s, more than one in three (35%) had a long-term health condition or problem that often restricted their daily activities in some way (Chart 12.1).

Chart 12.1

Prevalence of activity limitations among women and men aged 15 and over, by age group, Canada, 2009



* statistically significant difference from men at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

The prevalence of activity limitations is the same for women and men until they reach their 60s and 70s. In these two age groups, women had a significantly higher likelihood of reporting an activity limitation: among those in their 60s, 18% of women versus 16% of men, and among those in their 70s, 24% versus 21%.

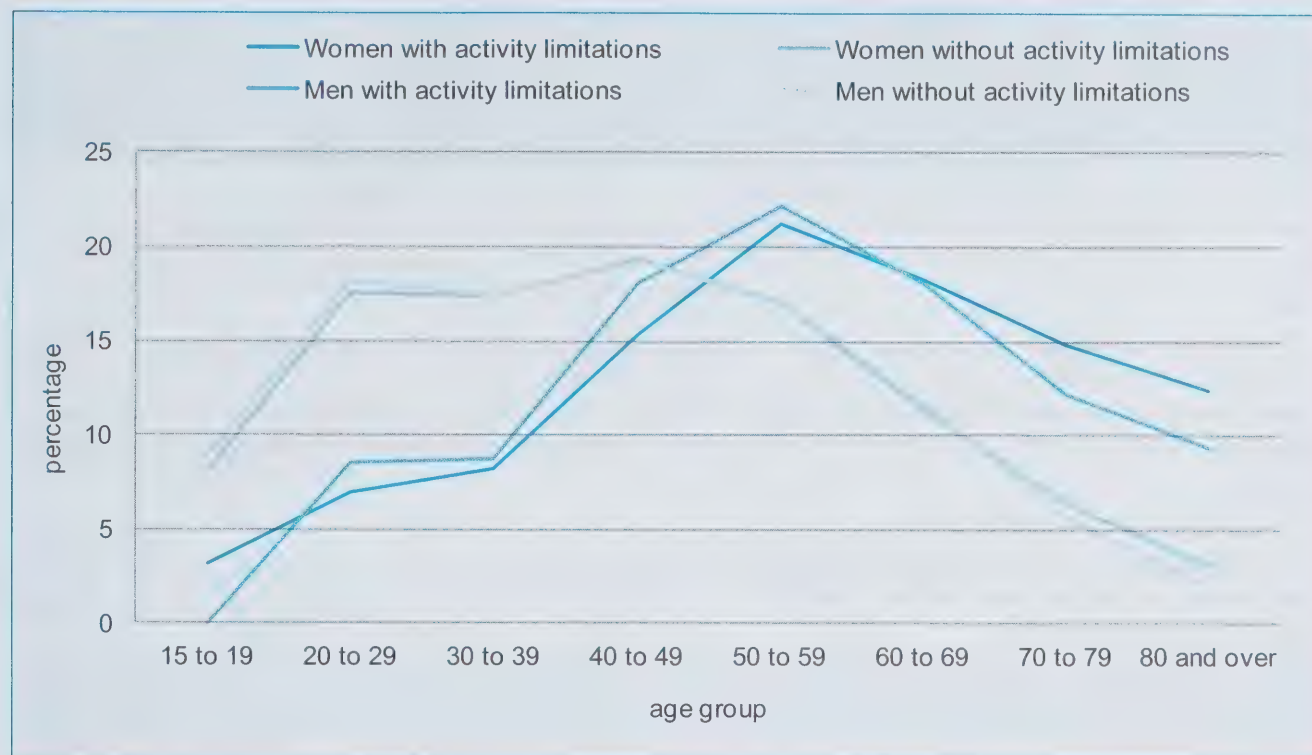
The population with activity limitations is substantially older

The population with activity limitations is considerably older than the population without them. Over 2 in 5 women with activity limitations (45%) are aged 60 and over; this is more than twice the proportion of women without activity limitations (21%). The same pattern is true of the male population with activity limitations (Chart 12.2).

Many demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the population with activity limitations reflect this older age composition. For instance, women with activity limitations have a higher rate of widowhood and lower levels of income and labour force participation compared with the rest of the population. These issues will be discussed later in this chapter.

Chart 12.2

Distribution of population with and without activity limitations, by age group, Canada, 2009



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Pain is the most common cause of poor functional health among women with activity limitations

The Health Utility Index (HUI) developed by McMaster University is used to assess a person's "functional health". It measures how well a person is able to see, to hear, to walk, to talk, to handle objects and to remember and think; it also assesses a person's emotional well-being and the amount of pain they experience. When all these components are rolled up into the HUI, the overall average functional health score of women with activity limitations is 0.57 out of 1. This score is considered to be an indicator of "moderate to poor" functional health. In contrast, the HUI score for women without activity limitations averaged 0.91, indicating that they have "good to full" functional health.²⁵⁶

Of the eight components of the HUI, pain was by far the major contributor to poorer functional health among women with activity limitations. Over 1 in 5 women with activity limitations (21%) reported that they did not participate in most activities because it was too painful for them. Another 2 in 5 (38%) said that pain prevented them from performing some activities (Table 12.1).

256. An overall HUI score of 0.8 to 1.0 is considered to indicate 'good to full' functional health; scores below 0.8 are considered to indicate 'moderate to poor' functional health. See: Statistics Canada. "Functional Health 2009." *Health Fact Sheets* no. 2. Catalogue No.82-625. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-625-x/2010002/article/11271-eng.htm>

Table 12.1

Women and men aged 15 and over, by degree of difficulty with functional health components and activity limitations status, Canada, 2009

Functional health component	Women		Men	
	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations
Health Utility Index score¹	0.57 *	0.91	0.61 *	0.92
		score		
		percentage		
Pain				
Prevents most activities	20.6 *	0.6	20.3 *	0.6
Prevents some activities	37.8 *	8.0	27.3 *	5.7
Pain does not prevent activities	4.5	4.7	6.6 *	4.8
No pain or discomfort	37.1 *	86.7	45.8 *	89.0
Cognition				
Very difficult to remember or think	7.5 *	1.3	8.7 *	1.1
Somewhat forgetful and some difficulty thinking	14.5 *	4.5	12.3 *	4.4
Somewhat forgetful or some difficulty thinking	24.8 *	18.6	26.8 *	19.2
Able to remember and think	53.2 *	75.6	52.2 *	75.3
Emotional health				
Somewhat to very unhappy	11.5 *	2.1	13.4 *	2.2
Somewhat happy	26.6 *	17.3	27.7 *	19.0
Happy and interested in life	61.9 *	80.6	58.9 *	78.8
Mobility				
Cannot walk at all	2.4	F	1.7	x
Need wheelchair or help from people	8.2 *	0.2 ^E	4.2	F
Difficulty walking	18.5 *	1.2	14.5 *	0.8
Able to walk without difficulty	71.0 *	98.6	79.5 *	99.1
Hearing				
Unable to hear	F	F	0.4 ^E	x
Able to hear with hearing aid	8.9 *	1.7	16.9 *	2.1
Able to hear well	90.6 *	98.3	82.8 *	97.9
Vision				
Unable to see even with lenses	2.1	F	1.5 ^{E*}	0 ^S
Unable to see close or distance even with lenses	2.9 *	0.7	2.5 *	0.4
Able to see well with or without lenses	95.0 *	99.3	95.9 *	99.5
Dexterity				
Need help with tasks	2.1 *	0.1 ^E	2.5 ^E	F
Some limitations but no help needed	1.5 *	0.2 ^E	0.8 ^{E*}	0.1 ^E
Full use of hands and fingers	96.3 *	99.7	96.7 *	99.8
Speech				
Able to be partially understood	2.2 *	0.3 ^E	3.9 *	0.3
Able to be well understood	97.8 *	99.7	96.1 *	99.7

* statistically significant difference from same sex without activity limitations at $p < 0.05$

1. The Health Utility Index produces a score ranging from 1 (perfect health), through 0 (health status equal to death). A score of 0.8 to 1.0 indicates "good to full" functional health; a score below 0.8 indicates "moderate to poor" functional health.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Just over 1 in 10 women with activity limitations (12%) indicated they had poor emotional well-being, saying that they were somewhat to very unhappy. Almost as many reported they had serious mobility problems: about 1 in 10 women with activity limitations (11%) needed a wheelchair or help from other people, or were unable to walk at all.

Over 7% of women with activity limitations reported impaired functioning for cognitive tasks, saying they found it very difficult to remember and to think. This finding probably reflects the much higher concentration of senior women in the population with activity limitations. In other key areas of functional health (vision, speech and dexterity), only 2% of women with activity limitations had severe difficulties.

Pain may be correlated with poor functional health in several key areas of everyday life. For example, 41% of women with activity limitations who had severe ambulatory problems reported that pain prevented them from performing most activities. Similarly, 31% of those who were somewhat to very unhappy had levels of pain that excluded them from performing most activities (data not shown).

Women perceive that their activity limitations stem largely from disease or illness

In 2009, about 41% of women with activity limitations attributed them to disease or illness, and another 16% to what they described simply as ageing. Men were less likely to identify these causes than women, at 29% and 12%, respectively (Table 12.2).

Table 12.2

Women and men with activity limitations aged 15 and over, by main cause of activity limitation, Canada, 2009

Main cause of activity limitation	Women percentage	Men
Illness or disease	40.7 *	29.5
Ageing	16.5 *	11.8
Accident	19.7 *	28.9
Motor vehicle accident	6.9	6.7
Accident at work	5.2 *	13.2
Accident at home	2.9	2.8
Other type of accident	4.7 *	6.3
Existed at birth or genetic	9.7	10.3
Work conditions	5.2 *	13.0
Emotional or mental health problem	4.7	3.5
Other (includes use of alcohol or drugs)	3.6	3.1 ^E

* statistically significant difference from men at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

On the other hand, men had almost a 1.5 times greater probability of identifying an accident (especially a work accident) as the origin of their activity limitation, at 29% compared with 20% of women. The likelihood that a man's working conditions were the source of his activity limitation was also much higher than a woman's (13% versus 5%).

Half of women with activity limitations have arthritis and/or back problems

Among people with activity limitations, 9 in 10 women (91%) had been diagnosed with at least one chronic health problem or condition, as had 86% of men. However, it is very common for people with activity limitations to have more than one health problem: 34% of women in this population had three to four chronic conditions, and 20% had five or more; the corresponding figures for men were 28% and 12%, respectively (data not shown).

The most common chronic conditions among women with activity limitations were arthritis (50%) and back problems (47%). High blood pressure affected close to 2 in 5 women (37%). Other commonly diagnosed chronic conditions were migraines (22%) and mood disorders (22%), such as depression, manic depression, bipolar disorder and dysthymia (Table 12.3).

Table 12.3

Prevalence of selected chronic conditions, women and men with activity limitations aged 15 and over, Canada, 2009

Chronic condition	Women	Men
	percentage	
Total — Chronic conditions	91.4 *	86.4
Arthritis	50.3 *	35.4
Back problems	47.2 *	42.7
High blood pressure	36.7 *	31.9
Migraines	22.4 *	12.2
Mood disorders	21.7 *	15.3
Anxiety disorders	15.5 *	11.4
Asthma	15.4 *	9.5
Bowel disorders	14.6 *	6.5
Urinary incontinence ¹	15.3 *	9.0
Heart disease	13.2 *	15.5
Diabetes	13.1 *	16.5
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease ²	12.3	12.8
Ulcers (stomach or intestinal)	8.1	8.9
Effects of a stroke	5.6	5.3
Cancer	4.8	5.0
Alzheimer's or dementia ²	2.4	2.9 ^E

* statistically significant difference from men at $p < 0.05$

1. Only for those aged 25 and over.

2. Only for those aged 35 and over.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

In general, most chronic health problems were more prevalent among women than men who had activity limitations. The exceptions were heart disease and diabetes, which were slightly more common among men with activity limitations. The likelihood of having chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), ulcers, cancer, Alzheimer's or the effects of a stroke did not differ between the sexes.

Over one-quarter of women with a chronic physical health problem also have a psychological condition

Women with chronic physical health conditions also often experience psychological problems such as depression or anxiety. Twenty-five percent (25%) of women and 16% of men with activity limitations had a psychological condition in addition to a chronic physical health problem (data not shown).

Some chronic diseases were more often accompanied by a psychological condition than others. For example, more than one in three women with bowel disorders, migraines, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and ulcers also had mood or anxiety disorders. In contrast, only about one in five women diagnosed with high blood pressure, cancer or the effects of a stroke had also been diagnosed with a psychological condition.

One-quarter of women with activity limitations live alone

As discussed earlier, living with activity limitations becomes increasingly common as people age. In fact, two-thirds of women with activity limitations are aged 50 or over; their living arrangements reflect those of an older population, that is, a higher concentration of one- and two-person households. Women with activity limitations were almost twice as likely as other women to live alone (26% versus 14%), and were only about half as likely to live with a spouse and children (15% versus 28%). Within the activity-limited population, men were less likely to live alone than women and more likely to live with their spouse in a couple only or with children (Table 12.4).

Table 12.4
Women and men aged 15 and over, by living arrangement and activity limitations status, Canada, 2009

Living arrangement	Women		Men	
	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations
	percentage			
Individual living alone	26.2 *	14.4	18.1 *	13.1
Living with spouse/partner	31.8 *	26.4	39.3 *	28.4
Living with spouse/partner and children	14.6 *	27.7	21.2 *	28.9
Lone parent	8.1 *	6.5	1.3 ^E	1.6
Child living with parent(s), siblings	6.5 *	12.7	8.3 *	16.4
Other arrangements	12.8	12.2	11.8	11.6

* statistically significant difference from same sex without activity limitations at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

The marital characteristics of women with activity limitations also reflect the fact that they are generally much older than women without activity limitations. Women with activity limitations were three times more likely to be widowed (17% versus 6% of other women) and almost twice as likely to be divorced or separated (14% versus 8%) (data not shown).

Women with activity limitations have less postsecondary education

Women with activity limitations are not as well-educated as other women: 42% have no more than high school compared with 33% of women without activity limitations. This disparity partly reflects the older age structure of the population with activity limitations, since seniors generally have lower levels of educational attainment. However, even when the population is restricted to women of prime working age (25- to 54-year-olds), those with activity limitations still have fewer educational credentials. They were twice as likely as women without activity limitations to have less than high school (13% versus 7.4%), and only two-thirds as likely to have a university degree (22% versus 32%). On the other hand, the likelihood that they had a community college diploma was about the same as that for women without activity limitations (Table 12.5).

Table 12.5

Women and men aged 15 and over, by educational attainment, age group and activity limitations status, Canada, 2009

Educational attainment	Women		Men	
	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations
	percentage			
Educational attainment (aged 15 and over)				
Less than high school	27.1 *	17.1	25.0 *	17.4
High school completion	14.8	16.3	13.7	15.7
Some postsecondary	8.4	8.4	7.4	8.1
Trades certificate or diploma	9.4 *	7.1	19.5 *	14.8
College/CEGEP diploma ¹	23.6 *	25.8	15.3 *	19.3
Bachelor's degree or above	13.7 *	23.0	15.9 *	22.1
Unknown	3.0	2.4	3.3	2.6
Educational attainment (aged 25 to 54)				
Less than high school	13.1 *	7.4	15.5 *	8.9
High school completion	14.2	14.6	16.3	15.2
Some postsecondary	9.4 *	6.2	8.2	6.0
Trades certificate or diploma	9.6	7.7	17.9	16.3
College/CEGEP diploma ¹	29.9	30.6	18.5 *	23.7
Bachelor's degree or above	21.6 *	31.5	20.8 *	27.2
Unknown	2.1 ^E	2.1	2.8 ^E	2.7

* statistically significant difference from same sex without activity limitations at $p < 0.05$

1. Includes university certificate below bachelor's level.

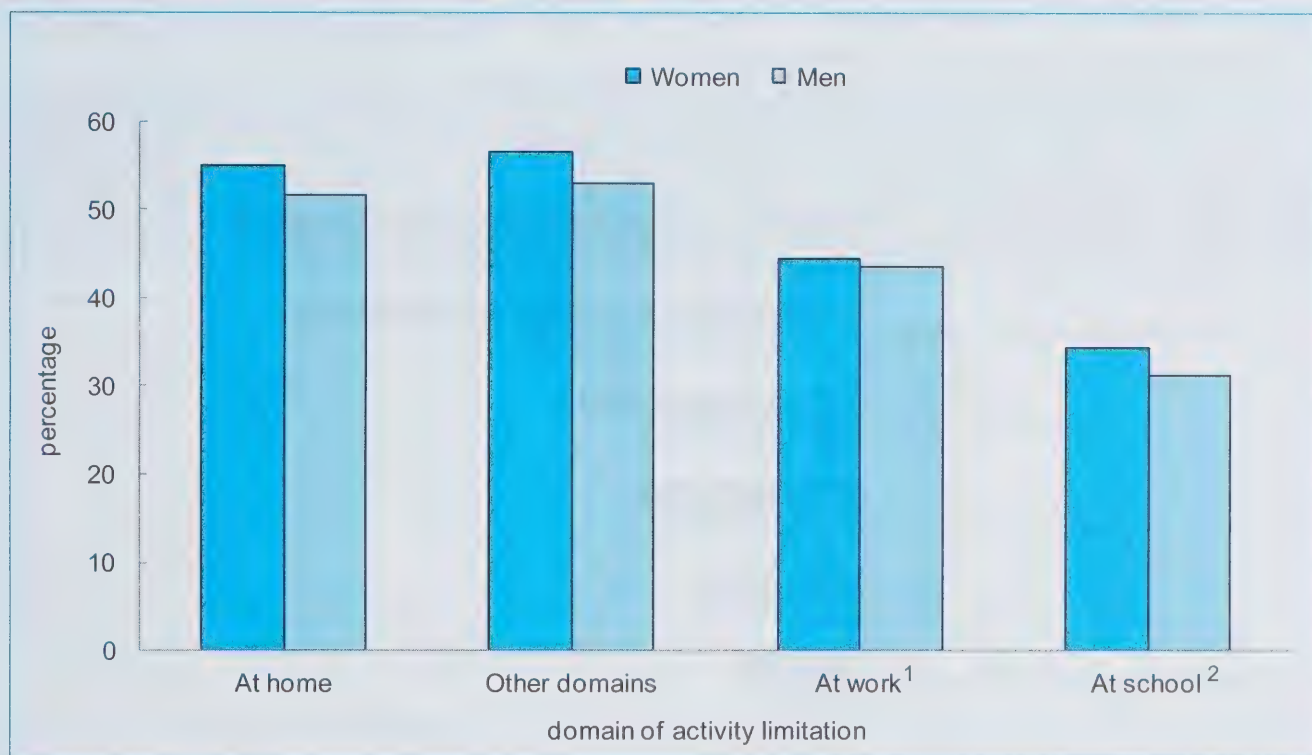
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Over half of women with activity limitations say activities at home are restricted by their condition

It is important to distinguish the domain in which a person's activity limitation manifests itself: having trouble functioning normally may have quite different implications depending on whether one is taking part in leisure events or discharging responsibilities at home or at work. Over half of women with activity limitations (55%) reported that their activities at home were often reduced by their long-term health problem or condition. A slightly larger percentage (57%) said their condition often curtailed their participation in leisure activities or created transportation problems. Similar proportions of men with activity limitations experienced restricted freedom of activity in each of these domains (Chart 12.3).

Chart 12.3

Domains in which a long-term health condition or problem limits activities among persons with activity limitations, Canada, 2009



1. Covers only the 40% of women and 51% of men aged 15 and over with disabilities who were employed.

2. Covers only the 10% of women and 9% of men aged 15 and over with disabilities who were attending school.

Note: "Other domains" includes transportation and leisure activities. Only the employed and students are included in the "At work" and "At school" categories.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Among women with activity limitations who were working at a job in 2009, 45% reported that their activities at work were often restricted by their condition. Substantially fewer women attending school said their condition often affected their academic activities (34%).

Half of women with activity limitations need help with everyday tasks

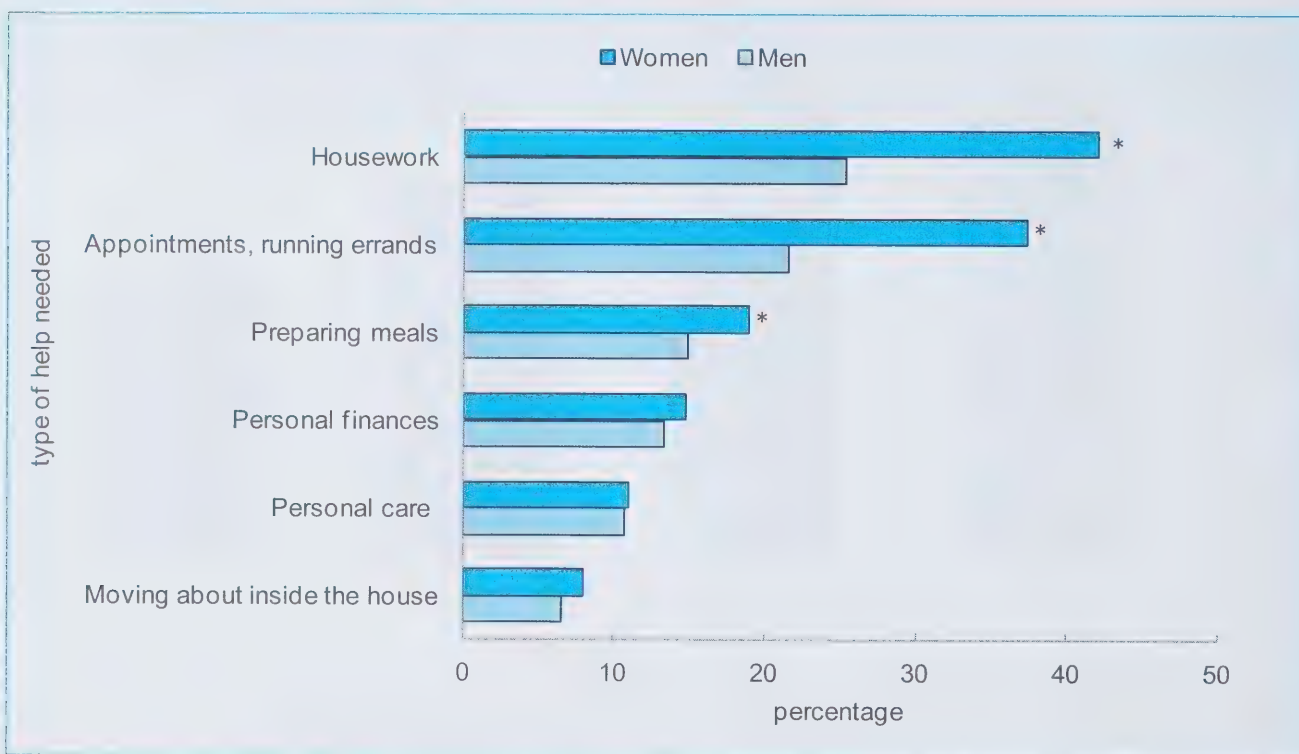
Just over half (52%) of women with activity limitations needed some help with at least one major activity of daily living. In contrast, only one-third (33%) of men with activity limitations said they needed help (data not shown).

This disparity between the sexes is due to the fact that men required much less assistance with household tasks and transportation. Women with activity limitations were much more likely to need help with housework (42% versus 25% of men), and with getting to appointments or running errands (37% versus 22% of men). Women also had a somewhat higher probability of needing help to prepare meals, at 19% compared with 15% of men with activity limitations (Chart 12.4).

On the other hand, men with activity limitations were just as likely as women to need help with personal finances, personal care and moving about inside their home.

Chart 12.4

Type of activities of daily living with which help is needed among persons with activity limitations aged 15 and over, Canada, 2009



* statistically significant difference from men with activity limitations at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Women of prime working age participate less in the workforce if they have activity limitations

In the week preceding the 2009 Canadian Community Health Survey, about 60% of women aged 25 to 54 with activity limitations had paid work or were self-employed. This is a significantly lower rate of employment than that for other women of prime working age, 81% of whom were working.

However, among prime-working-age women who were employed, those with activity limitations were no different than other women in terms of the amount of hours they worked and the kinds of jobs they held. More than half (54%) of employed women aged 25 to 54 with activity limitations usually worked between 30 and 40 hours a week; just under one-quarter (24%) worked more hours. The same is true of women without activity limitations (Table 12.6).

Table 12.6

Women and men aged 25 to 54, by selected employment characteristics and activity limitations status, Canada, 2009

Employment characteristic	Women		Men	
	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations
	percentage			
Employment status				
Employed last week	60.2 *	80.6	66.6 *	88.9
Not employed last week	27.2 *	18.7	17.4 *	10.3
Permanently unable to work	12.6 *	0.7 ^E	16.1 *	0.8
Usual hours worked per week in current job ¹				
Less than 30 hours	22.1	16.7	6.6 ^E	4.2
30 to 40 hours	54.3	59.1	45.7	47.4
41 to 50 hours	13.7	16.4	24.9	27.3
More than 50 hours	9.9 ^E	7.8	22.8	21.1
Occupation ¹				
Management	5.8 ^E	7.7	13.7 ^E	13.2
Business, finance and administrative	24.8	28.6	15.8 ^E	12.3
Natural and applied sciences and related	4.1 ^E	3.6	7.2 ^{E*}	12.4
Health	12.7 ^E	13.5	F	2.2
Social science, education, govenment, culture, recreation, sport and religion	19.6	18.3	4.6 ^{E*}	9.0
Sales and service	25.5	22.1	17.0	14.6
Trades and blue-collar	7.6 ^E	6.2	37.8	36.2

* statistically significant difference from same sex without activity limitations at $p < 0.05$

1. Employed persons only.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

The majority of working women aged 25 to 54 with activity limitations were employed either in sales and service jobs (25%) or jobs in business, finance and administration (25%). Only 6% were employed in management occupations. A significant proportion (20%) worked in occupations related to social sciences, education, government, culture and similar jobs; another 13% worked in health occupations. This distribution is very similar to that of women the same age without activity limitations.

Sixty-seven percent (67%) of men aged 25 to 54 with activity limitations had a job, a higher employment rate than that of women with activity limitations (60%). In contrast, men were twice as likely to work over 40 hours a week, at 48%, compared with 24% of women (Chart 12.5).

Chart 12.5

Women and men aged 25 to 54 with activity limitations, by selected employment characteristics, Canada, 2009



* statistically significant difference from men at $p < 0.05$

Note: hours calculated for employed persons only.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Men with activity limitations were also twice as likely as women to work in management occupations, which are generally higher-paying white-collar jobs that are less physically demanding. On the other hand, the most common occupations held by men were trades and blue-collar jobs (38%) (Table 12.6), which may explain the higher proportion of men who attribute the cause of their activity limitation to their working conditions and job-related accidents (Table 12.2).

Accommodations in the workplace

In 2006, 545,000 women with activity limitations were employed in the workforce. According to the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, over 4 in 10 of these women (44%) reported that they needed at least one kind of accommodation from their employer in order to be able to work (Table 12.7).

The most common requirement, identified by almost one-quarter (23%) of working women with activity limitations, was a modified work day or reduced work hours. Somewhat fewer women (20%) needed a special chair or back support. About 14% needed to change or modify the duties of their job, and/or to have their workstation modified or replaced by an ergonomic workstation. Access to facilities—parking, washrooms and elevators—was needed by about 5% of women with activity limitations in order for them to do their work. Other, more specialized types of accommodation, including technical aids and human assistants, were required by fewer than 3% of employed women with activity limitations.

When women were asked if the accommodations they needed had been made available to them, the majority answered that they had. At least 8 in 10 women needing accessible washrooms, modified working hours, and help with physical access like handrails or ramps had obtained them from their employer. So had at least 7 in 10 women who needed an accessible elevator, parking, transportation, or modified workstation. At least 60% of women requiring a special chair or back support, job redesign, or other type of equipment, help or work arrangement said their employer had made the necessary help available. An accommodation had been received by half (50%) of the women who needed the support of a human assistant, such as a person to read for them, provide sign language interpretation, or be a job coach or personal assistant.

Table 12.7

Type of accommodation required to be able to work, employed persons with activity limitations, Canada, 2006

Type of accommodation	Requiring accommodation to work		Accommodation made available as a proportion of those requiring it	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
			percentage	
Because of my condition, I require ... to be able to work				
No accommodation required	56 *	65	...	...
Modified hours or days or reduced work hours	23 *	17	82	82
A special chair/back support	20 *	13	68	64
Job redesign (modified or different duties)	14	14	67	64
A modified or ergonomic workstation	14 *	7	70	72
Appropriate parking	5 *	3 ^E	78	73
Accessible washrooms	5 *	2 ^E	88	97
An accessible elevator	4 *	2 ^E	79	73
Other equipment, help or work arrangement	4 ^E	3 ^E	62 ^E	73
Accessible transportation	4 ^{E*}	2 ^E	75	73 ^E
Human support, such as a reader, sign language interpreter, job coach or personal assistant	2 ^E	3 ^E	50 ^E	64
Handrails, ramps	2 ^E	2 ^E	81	F
Technical aids, such as a voice synthesizer, a TTY, an infrared system or portable notetaker	1 ^E	2 ^E	56 ^E	42 ^E
A computer with Braille, large print, voice recognition, or a scanner	F	1 ^E	64 ^E	51 ^E
Communication aids, such as Braille or large print reading material or recording equipment	F	F	x	F

* statistically significant difference between women and men at $p < 0.05$

Source: Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2006.

Women with activity limitations report 25% lower personal income than other women

Women with activity limitations have a considerably lower average income than other women. According to the 2009 Canadian Community Health Survey, their average personal income was about three-quarters that of women without activity limitations, at \$24,000 compared with \$32,100 (Table 12.8).

These averages did vary considerably by age group, however. Among women aged 25 to 44, women with activity limitations reported an average personal income about 79% of that of other women, at \$28,600 compared with \$36,300; among women aged 45 to 64, the income gap between those with and without activity limitations was only 65%. Among seniors though, the gap narrowed again: women with activity limitations reported an average personal income that was 91% of that of other women (\$21,400 versus \$23,400).

Table 12.8

Average income of women and men aged 15 and over, by age group and activity limitations status, Canada, 2009

Income type and age group	Women			Men		
	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	Ratio	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	Ratio
	dollars					
Average personal income¹						
Aged 15 years and over	24,000	32,100	0.75	41,200	51,000	0.81
15 to 24 years	12,000	13,100	0.92	17,400 ^E	16,300	1.07
25 to 44 years	28,600	36,300	0.79	48,700	57,300	0.85
45 to 64 years	25,600	39,400	0.65	46,400	65,000	0.71
65 years and older	21,400	23,400	0.91	31,400	39,300	0.80
Average household income¹						
Aged 15 years and over	54,500	78,100	0.70	65,400	86,700	0.75
15 to 24 years	71,000	73,800	0.96	66,500	87,000	0.76
25 to 44 years	62,500	82,800	0.75	71,000	87,800	0.81
45 to 64 years	58,600	86,800	0.68	72,400	95,400	0.76
65 years and older	41,400	44,000	0.94	49,400	57,400	0.86

1. Includes only those who reported income.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Average personal income also varies considerably depending on a woman's province of residence. In Atlantic Canada, the ratio of women with activity limitations to women without them was 81%, and it was 64% in Alberta (Table 12.9).

Table 12.9

Average income of women and men aged 15 and over, by region and activity limitations status, Canada, 2009

Income type and region	Women			Men		
	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	Ratio	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	Ratio
			dollars			
Average personal income¹						
Canada	24,000	32,100	0.75	41,200	51,000	0.81
Atlantic Canada	22,000	27,200	0.81	33,500	43,400	0.77
Quebec	22,200	29,000	0.77	43,000	44,200	0.97
Ontario	25,400	33,400	0.76	41,300	53,000	0.78
Prairie provinces	23,300	32,100	0.73	41,700	49,200	0.85
Alberta	23,600	36,600	0.64	50,000	65,000	0.77
British Columbia ²	23,900	33,700	0.71	36,700	51,400	0.71
Average household income¹						
Canada	54,500	78,100	0.70	65,400	86,700	0.75
Atlantic Canada	50,800	65,200	0.78	49,300	73,300	0.67
Quebec	48,300	67,600	0.71	67,600	75,000	0.90
Ontario	55,200	82,600	0.67	65,200	92,200	0.71
Prairie provinces	51,300	77,400	0.66	67,800	87,600	0.77
Alberta	66,900	101,300	0.66	80,200	106,300	0.75
British Columbia ²	58,600	75,900	0.77	61,200	83,900	0.73

1. Includes only those who reported income.

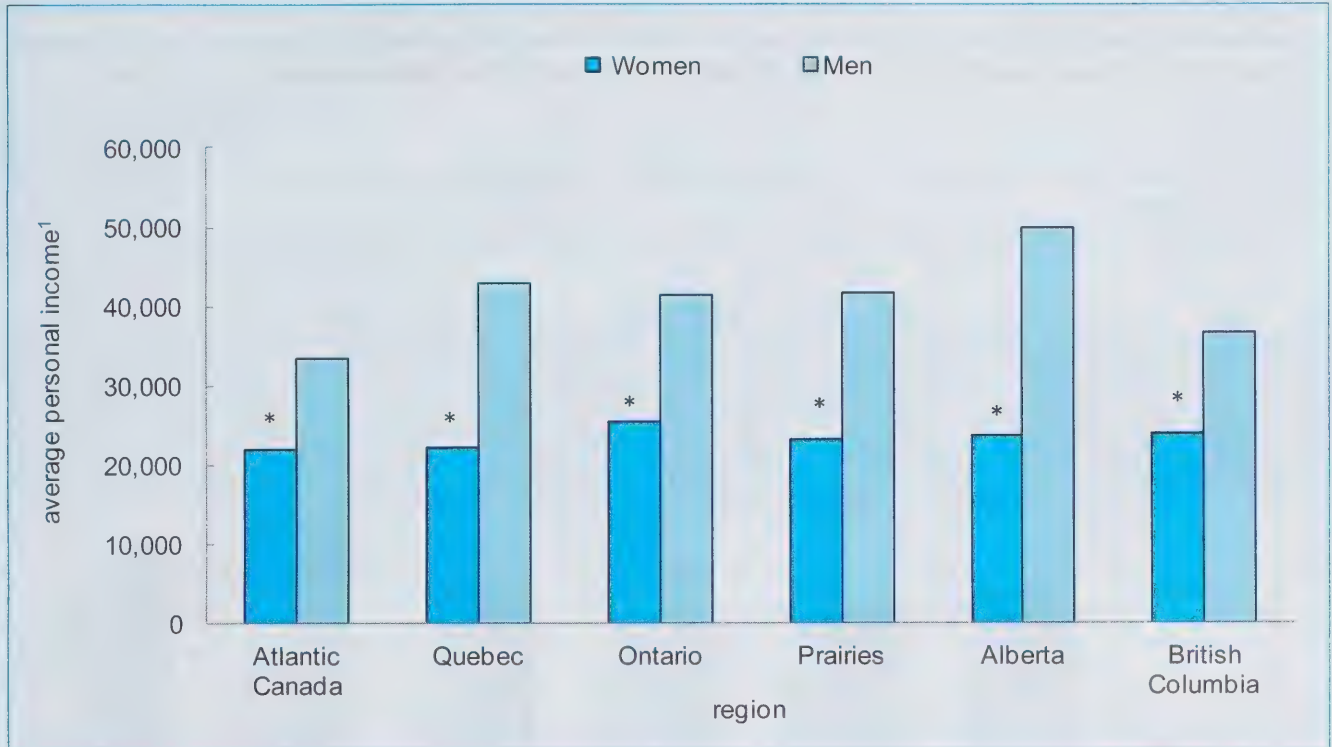
2. Includes Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Men with activity limitations had lower personal income than other men, but they did much better than women. Their average personal income was \$41,200, which was 72% higher than the average for women with activity limitations. The size of this disparity varied across the country; it was about 66% in Atlantic Canada and British Columbia and 47% in Alberta (Chart 12.6).

Chart 12.6

Average personal income of women and men with activity limitations, by region, Canada, 2009



* statistically significant difference from men at $p < 0.05$

1. Includes only those who reported income.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

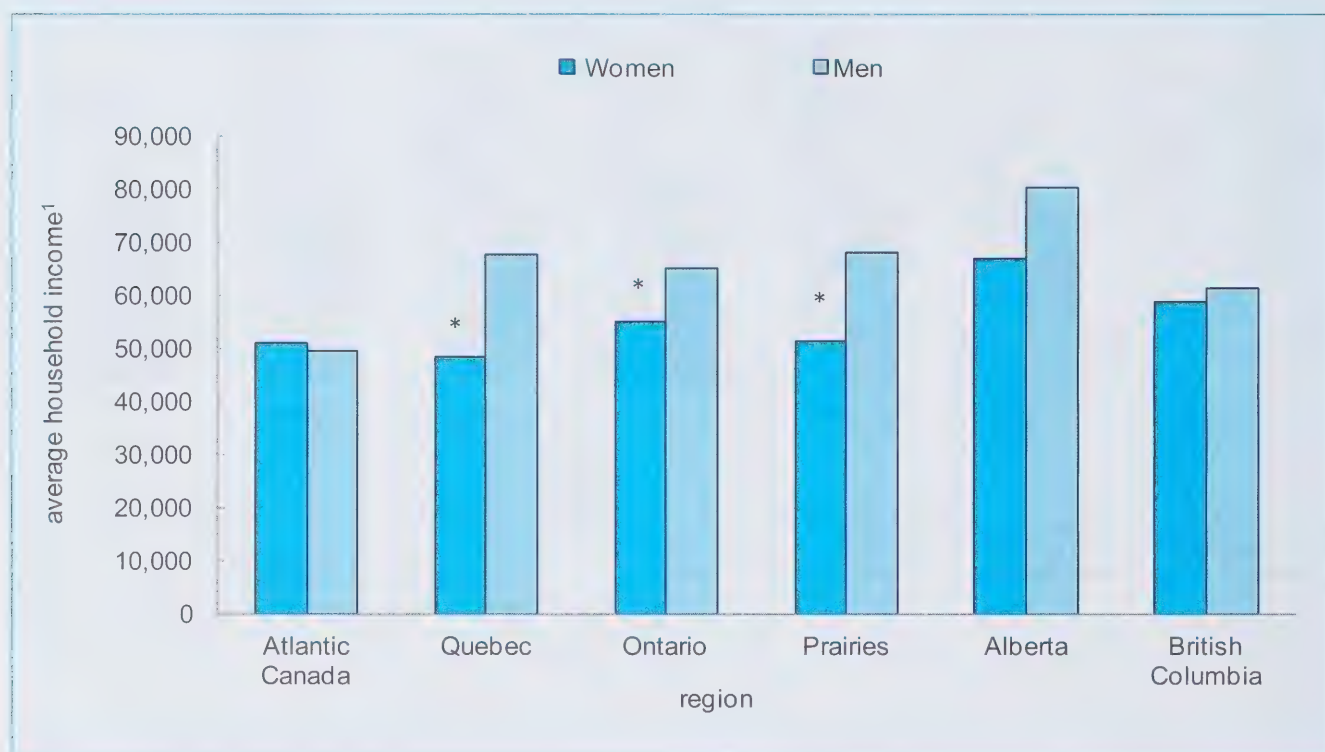
Household income gap even wider

At the household level, the income gap between women with and without activity limitations was even wider than for personal income. Average household income was \$54,500 for women with activity limitations and \$78,100 for those without, a difference of about 30%. As shown earlier, a significantly higher proportion of women with activity limitations live alone, which would account in part for this phenomenon. Also, as discussed earlier with regard to personal income, average household income varies substantially depending on age group (Table 12.8).

However, when comparing women and men with activity limitations, the gap between the sexes was smaller for household income (17%) than for personal income (42%). In fact, in Atlantic Canada and British Columbia, household income was roughly equivalent for both women and men with activity limitations (Chart 12.7).

Chart 12.7

Average household income of women and men with activity limitations, by region, Canada, 2009



* statistically significant difference from men at $p < 0.05$

1. Includes only those who reported income.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

No income gap when main source of income is the same

The overall income average masks a somewhat more complicated story. The income gap between women with and without activity limitations largely disappears when their main source of income is the same. For example, women with activity limitations whose primary source of income is employment (paid work and self-employment) reported personal income of \$37,300, statistically the same as that for women without activity limitations (\$39,400). The same is true for most other personal income sources. The exception is income received mainly from pensions and investment—in this case, women with activity limitations averaged about \$4,000 less, at \$22,600 compared with \$26,700 (Table 12.10).

The pattern is somewhat different for household income. Women with activity limitations live in lower-income households than those without activity limitations. When looking at specific income sources, women with activity limitations had less household income if its main source was from paid work or self-employment or from pensions and investments.

Table 12.10
Income of women and men aged 15 and over with activity limitations, by main source of income, Canada, 2009

Main source of income	Women		Men	
	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations
	dollars			
Paid work or self-employment				
Average personal income	37,300	39,400	59,500	57,300
Average household income	75,500 *	88,900	88,100 *	94,900
Pensions, investments¹				
Average personal income	22,600 *	26,700	32,400 *	39,800
Average household income	41,700 *	46,900	48,300 *	58,600
Employment Insurance, Worker's Compensation				
Average personal income	18,800	21,200	22,700	26,600
Average household income	34,100	32,500	31,100	32,800
Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, Social Assistance				
Average personal income	12,200	12,800	13,500	14,600
Average household income	18,500	19,300	18,500 *	22,300
Other²				
Average personal income	17,300	16,000	26,500	28,600
Average household income	30,000 *	41,200	44,100	47,500

* statistically significant difference from same sex without activity limitations at $p < 0.05$

1. Includes private pensions, Canada/Quebec Pension Plan, Registered Retirement Savings Plans and Registered Retirement Income Funds, other investments.

2. Includes child tax benefit, child support, alimony and other sources of income.

Note: Includes only those respondents who reported income.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

The majority of women with activity limitations report non-employment income as their main source of income

If women's personal income does not differ much when it comes from the same main source, why is the overall average income so much lower for women with activity limitations? One reason is that the majority of them rely on non-employment income. Compared with other women, they were half as likely to report paid work or self-employment as their principal source of personal income, (35% versus 68%); on the other hand, they were twice as likely to report pensions and investments (28% versus 12%) and three times as likely to rely on government transfers—that is, Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement and Social Assistance (21% versus 7%). Similar findings generally apply also to their main source of household income (Table 12.11).

Table 12.11

Women and men aged 15 and over, by main source of income and activity limitations status, Canada, 2009

Main source of income	Women		Men	
	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations
	percentage			
Main source of personal income				
No income	5.4	6.4	2.4 ^E	3.2
Paid work or self-employment	34.7 *	68.4	44.9 *	78.2
Pensions, investments ¹	28.3 *	12.0	30.3 *	12.0
Employment Insurance, Worker's Compensation	3.5 *	1.9	4.6 *	1.5
Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, Social Assistance	21.1 *	6.8	13.4 *	3.4
Other ²	7.0 *	4.5	4.4 *	1.7
Main source of household income				
No income	F	0.3 ^E	x	0.3 ^E
Paid work or self-employment	50.6 *	78.4	55.3 *	82.8
Pensions, investments ¹	27.8 *	12.5	27.3 *	11.5
Employment Insurance, Worker's Compensation	2.0 *	0.9	3.0 *	0.9
Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, Social Assistance	15.1 *	5.5	11.5 *	3.2
Other ²	4.2 *	2.3	2.8 ^{E*}	1.3

* statistically significant difference from same sex without activity limitations at $p < 0.05$

1. Includes private pensions, Canada/Quebec Pension Plan, Registered Retirement Savings Plans and Registered Retirement Income Funds, other investments.

2. Includes child tax benefit, child support, alimony and other sources of income.

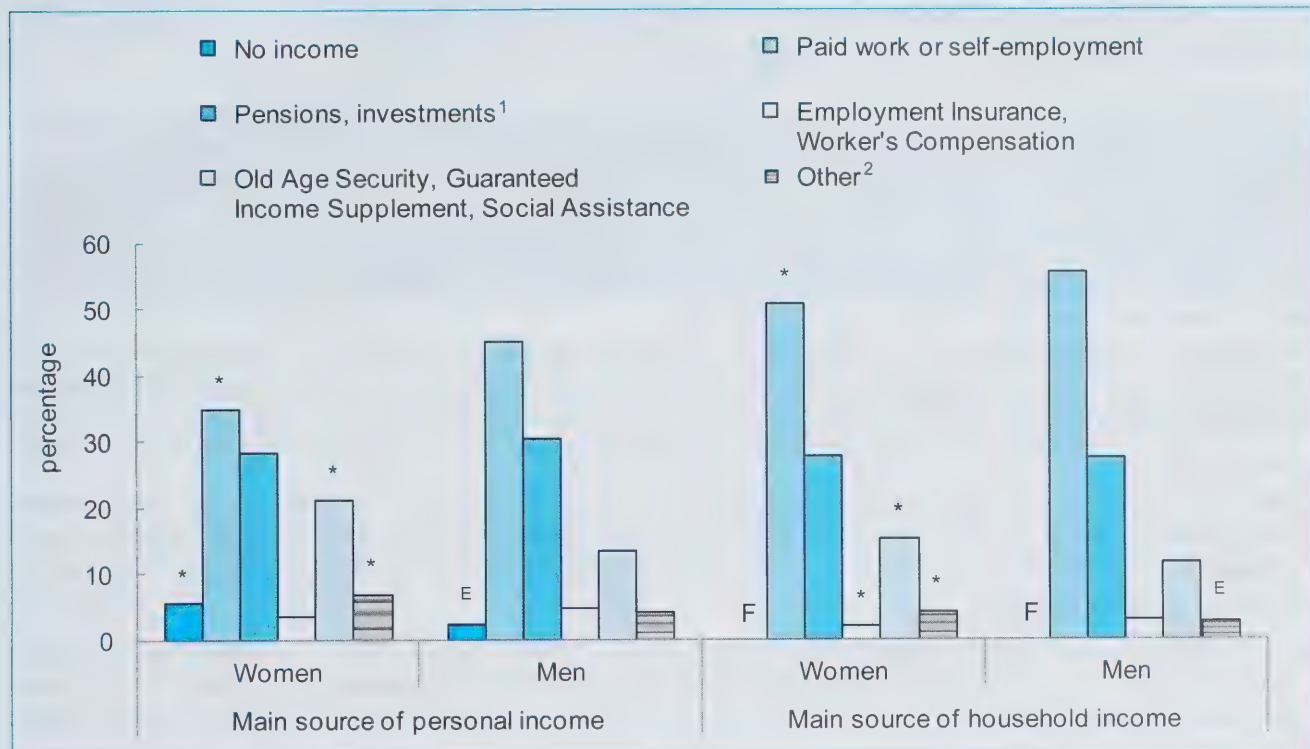
Note: Includes only those respondents who reported income.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

When comparing women and men with activity limitations, men have a substantially higher probability of reporting employment as their main source of income, and a lower probability of relying on government transfers (Chart 12.8).

Chart 12.8

Distribution of women and men with activity limitations aged 15 and over, by main source of income, Canada, 2009



* statistically significant difference from men with the same income source at $p < 0.05$

1. Includes private pensions, Canada/Quebec Pension Plan, Registered Retirement Savings Plans and Registered Retirement Income Funds, other investments.

2. Includes child tax benefit, child support, alimony and other sources of income.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Women with activity limitations score below normal on well-being measures

Across a range of subjective measures of well-being, women with activity limitations scored lower than other women. On the Health Utility Index that measures overall ability to function normally in everyday life, 70% had moderate to poor functional health, compared with 13% of women without activity limitations. They were also four times as likely to report that their mental health was poor to fair (17% compared with 4%) (Table 12.12).

Table 12.12

Distribution of women and men aged 15 and over, by selected measures of well-being and activity limitations status, Canada, 2009

Measure of well-being	Women		Men	
	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations
	percentage			
Health Utility Index (HUI)				
Good to full functional health	29.9 *	86.8	36.1 *	88.4
Moderate to poor functional health	70.1 *	13.2	63.9 *	11.6
Self-rated mental health				
Poor to fair	17.1 *	3.9	17.1 *	3.5
Good	30.1 *	20.3	29.1 *	19.6
Very good	29.7 *	38.1	29.3 *	36.8
Excellent	23.1 *	37.7	24.5 *	40.0
Self-rated general health ¹				
Poor to fair	43.8 *	7.2	43.2 *	7.0
Good	34.7 *	27.4	30.8	28.3
Very good	17.3 *	40.9	18.4 *	39.5
Excellent	4.2 *	24.5	7.6 *	25.1
Compared to last year, my health is...				
Better	18.1	19.2	16.7	18.5
The same	47.0 *	71.1	52.2 *	73.6
Worse	34.9 *	9.7	31.1 *	7.8
Life satisfaction				
Less satisfied with life	24.0 *	6.1	25.5 *	6.0
Satisfied with life	50.1 *	53.1	50.9 *	56.3
Very satisfied with life	25.9 *	40.9	23.6 *	37.7
Perceived life stress				
Low	28.3 *	33.1	30.5 *	36.9
Medium	37.5 *	43.4	37.4 *	42.8
High	34.2 *	23.5	32.1 *	20.3
Perceived work stress (employed only)				
Low	23.2 *	27.6	22.3 *	30.1
Medium	32.0 *	40.8	38.5	42.1
High	44.7 *	31.6	39.3 *	27.8

* statistically significant difference from the same sex without activity limitations at $p < 0.05$

1. Not only the absence of disease or injury but also physical, mental and social well-being.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

Women with activity limitations rated their general life satisfaction much lower and their level of stress much higher than other women. While 26% of women with activity limitations reported being very satisfied with their lives, 41% of other women did so. Similarly, over one-third of women with activity limitations described their daily lives as high-stress, compared with fewer than one-quarter of women without activity limitations. Among women who were employed, a high level of stress was even more common, at 45% and 32%, respectively.

Much of the dissatisfaction that women with activity limitations express about their lives stems from the state of their health.²⁵⁷ Even when women with activity limitations were asked to think about their health in more holistic terms—that is, not just as the presence (or absence) of any disease or illness, but also as their physical, mental and social well-being—over 4 in 10 (44%) described their general health as poor to fair. Furthermore, one-third (35%) said that their health had deteriorated since the previous year (Table 12.12).

In general, men with activity limitations do not score much differently than women on these measures of well-being. They were somewhat more likely than women to fall into the good to full functional health category as measured by the Health Utility Index, and as such were a little more likely to describe their general health as excellent, at 8% compared with 4% for women with activity limitations.

Women with activity limitations visit the doctor more and exercise less

Not surprisingly, almost all women with activity limitations had visited a health professional in the 12 months preceding the survey. They were more than twice as likely to have gone to their family doctor or medical specialist five or more times in the previous year (60% versus 25% of other women). On average, they reported about 9 visits to a medical practitioner, compared with almost 4 for other women (Table 12.13).

Women with activity limitations were only half as likely as other women to be physically active on a daily basis. Over two-thirds were classified as inactive, based on the number of calories they burned doing physical activities each day. Comparing women and men with activity limitations, women were less likely to be active, at 13% versus 19%.

Reflecting their relative lack of physical activity, women with activity limitations were considerably more likely than other women to be overweight (31%) or obese (28%). On the other hand, they were less likely to be overweight than men with activity limitations.

257. Crompton, S. 2010. "Living with disabilities series: Life satisfaction of women with disabilities." *Canadian Social Trends* no. 89. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-008.

Table 12.13

Distribution of persons aged 15 and over by health behaviours and activity limitations status, Canada, 2009

Health behaviour	Women		Men	
	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations	With activity limitations	Without activity limitations
	percentage			
Have visited health professional in past 12 months	98.7 *	96.0	97.8 *	91.2
Visits to a medical doctor in past 12 months				
Low range (0 to 1)	9.6 *	33.4	17.1 *	50.0
Mid range (2 to 4)	30.6 *	41.1	33.3	34.4
High range (5 or more)	59.8 *	25.4	49.6 *	15.5
Level of daily leisure time and transportation activity ¹				
Active	12.5 *	26.4	19.3 *	33.3
Moderately active	18.4 *	26.4	21.9 *	25.8
Inactive	69.1 *	47.2	58.8 *	40.9
Body Mass Index ²				
Underweight	3.4	3.8	1.4 ^E	1.2
Normal weight	36.9 *	54.4	31.4 *	40.6
Overweight	31.4 *	26.6	36.1 *	40.6
Obese	28.4 *	15.1	31.1 *	17.6
		average		
Number of medical doctor visits	8.9 *	3.8	8.0 *	2.6

* statistically significant difference from the same sex without activity limitations at $p < 0.05$

1. Based on total daily Energy Expenditure (calories/kg/day). Transportation covers walking and bicycling.

2. Aged 18 and over only. International standard.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2009.

